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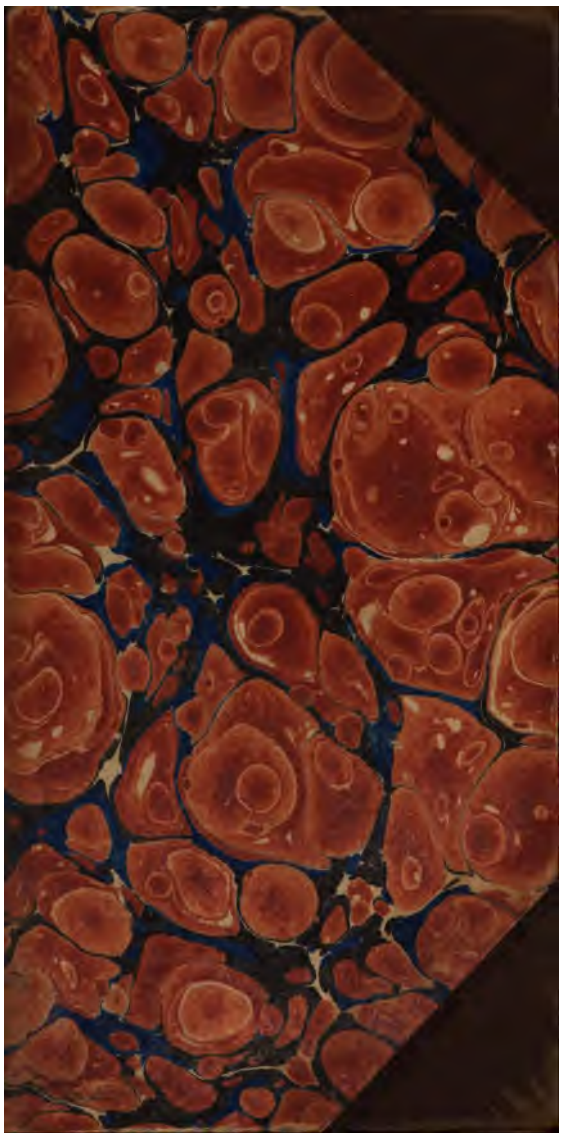
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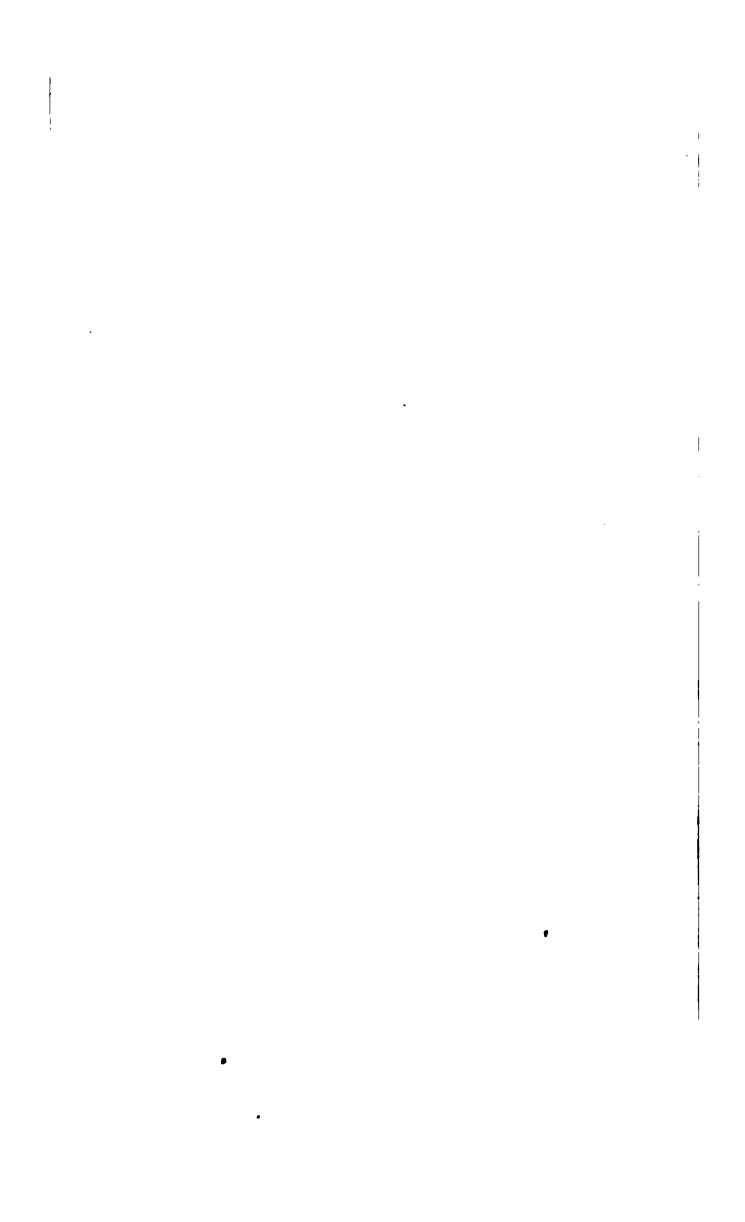
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TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE,

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T. BRITAIN, PRINTER, GRAFTON STREET, EAST.

A
TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE

FROM

A HUMBLLED SINNER,

On being permitted to enter his Eighty-second Year.

IN TWO LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

BY THE WRITER OF 'A LETTER TO AN AGED FRIEND.'

~~With~~ an Introductory Address,

BY THE

REV. JAMES THOMAS HOLLOWAY, D.D.

Minister of Fitzroy Chapel, Fitzroy Square.

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."—Psalm lxxi. 9.

"My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."—Psalm lxxiii. 26.

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET AND CO., BERNERS STREET.

MDCCCXXVII.

101.



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TO THE READER.

THE Christian experience unfolded in this little volume, is one among the cloud of witnesses that confirm the truth; and prove that the economy of the grace of God, with few variations, is the same in all them that believe. From these few pages, much Scripture knowledge may be gathered—much spiritual instruction unto edification. The evidences of a genuine conversion unto God contained therein, and the progressive developments of that divine workmanship—bearing light to the understanding, and increasing love to the heart, exhibit a striking portraiture of the vital character of regeneration in its inward workings, operations, and effects.

The Christian reader will here be reminded of the patience, long suffering, and forbearance of God towards him; during the years of his ignorance—the unmerited love of God to him in the day he first knew Him, or rather was known of Him—the divine faithfulness and power in his after preservation—in enabling him to hold on his way—and; withal, the wisdom of God in continuing to frame—to mould—to mature—to fit him for heaven—for the “inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Pet. i. 4, 5).

Let the aged especially pause and reflect—try his profession and his faith by this Scripture rule—remembering the ex-

cept which constitutes the preface of our Lord to this all-important work—"except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). The young *may* die—but those advanced in years *must* die *shortly*—and if they die *not* in the Lord, they will die *eternally*. Let then the aged beware and look well to it; and seek, by earnest prayer, the aged pilgrim's God, whose memoirs they have read; that, in the day of his appearing, "they may be found in Christ Jesus, not having their own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Romans iii. 22, and Philip. iii. 9) —the best—the only preparation for a peaceful death, and a blissful eternity.

JAMES THOMAS HOLLOWAY,

Minister of Fitzroy Chapel, Fitzroy Square.

August 31st, 1837.

The foregoing, from the heart, and the pen of an evangelical divine, and faithful ambassador of the gospel, whose never-ending theme in the pulpit, and on all fit occasions out of it, is a crucified Christ, may, I trust, have the effect of drawing the reader's attention to the hope that has been given to me, and the answers I am prepared with, if questioned as to the reason of it (1 Peter iii. 15).

To add to what Dr. Holloway has said, may appear a work of supererogation: but as the people of Cesarea Philippi, according to the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were divided in their opinions as to who Jesus was; so, also those of the present day, who think of Him at all, think differently. I would therefore avail myself of this opportunity of humbly adjuring all such,

in the words of the prophet, as they tender their peace and comfort, no longer to "halt between two opinions" (1 Kings xviii. 21), and forthwith try themselves as Jesus tried the Pharisees, (Matthew xxii. 42) "*what think ye of Christ?*"—on which question, propounded to them by Jesus, the devout Mr. John Newton constructed the following very appropriate paraphrase; which cannot fail to interest those, who in the confidence of finding all *as well as can be expected*, and living in the hope of a farther advance towards perfection—"forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before—press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philipp. iii. 13, 14), and so are not deterred from looking into themselves.

A. G.

"What think ye of Christ?" is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him.
As Jesus appears in your view,
As He is beloved or not,
So God is disposed to you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot.

Some take Him a creature to be,
A man, or an angel at most;
Sure those have not feelings like me,
Nor know themselves wretched and lost.
So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in his blood,
Nor on his protection rely,
Unless I were sure He is God.

Some style Him the Pearl of great price,
And say He's the Fountain of joys,
Yet feed upon folly and vice,
And cleave to the world and its toys.
Like Judas, the Saviour they kiss,
And, while they salute Him, betray;
Ah! what will profession like this
Avail in His terrible day?

If ask'd what of Jesus I think,
Though still my best thoughts are but poor,

I SAY HE'S MY MEAT AND MY DRINK,
 MY LIFE, AND MY STRENGTH, AND MY STORE;
 MY SHEPHERD, MY HUSBAND, MY FRIEND;
 MY SAVIOUR FROM SIN AND FROM THERALL;
 MY HOPE FROM BEGINNING TO END;
 MY PORTION, MY LORD, AND MY ALL.

The Christian, in those palsied comfortless frames with which he is occasionally visited, and appear to be appointed as trials of his constancy, and, when sanctified, are useful tests of his faith, is electrified, as it were, by but the *mention*, *with due reverence*, of that adorable Name, so little esteemed by the many; but to the few who know it, and feel its mystical power, endeared by the tender ties of Mediator and Peace-maker between them and their offended and, without its intervention, implacable God. The above-quoted Mr. Newton, musing on its enchanting influence, pours out his enraptured soul in the following happy strain:—

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear !
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And casteth out his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast ;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And, to the weary, rest.

Dear Name ! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place ;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

By Thee my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled ;
Satan accuses me in vain,
And I am own'd a child.

JESUS ! MY SHEPHERD, HUSBAND, FRIEND,
MY PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING !
MY LORD, MY LIFE, MY WAY, MY END,
ACCEPT THE PRAISE I BRING.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought ;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath ;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death !

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FROM

A HUMBLLED SINNER,

On being permitted to enter his Eighty-second Year.

IN TWO LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

BY THE WRITER OF 'A LETTER TO AN AGED FRIEND.'

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."—Psalm lxxi. 9.

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T. BRITTAIN, PRINTER, GRAFTON STREET EAST.

P R E F A C E.

TO MY OCTOGENARIAN BROTHERS
AND SISTERS.

DEAR FRIENDS,

It was the farthest from my expectation, when I embodied certain of my meditations in the following form, that they would ever meet your eye through the press, but it has been ordered otherwise; and being truly the outpouring of a soul grateful for the past, and taking wing for the realization of its hopes for

the future through the blood of our blessed Saviour, and sometimes, as it were, fluttering in a state bordering on uncertainty whether it was, or was not still manacled to its old companion in sin, such of you as have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," and are "looking for his glorious appearing," will mourn and rejoice with your cotemporary alternately as, under the varying circumstances of his experience, it may be found to coalesce with your own.

To *you*, kindred souls, I have no more to say; and it may be thought, by those who know no better, that it would ill become me, who have been but lately brought to light out of a long life of worse than Egyptian darkness, to dogmatize on the folly and madness of those of our standing from whom we have "come

out" (2 Cor. vi. 17); who, as St. John describes them, are "lovers of darkness rather than light." But I may do them a friendly turn, by calling their attention to their critical attitude, on the threshold of eternity, perfect wrecks of human nature, with (as I have elsewhere observed*) one foot in this world and the other in the next, still tenaciously clinging to that they are leaving, with a fearful anticipation (as well they may) of the change that awaits them in that whither they are hastening, if they ever bestow a thought upon the subject.

Nor do I, still but a nursling in the school of Christ, and a very dull scholar, claim any right to preach to them; but, on the authority of God's word I may tell them,

* LETTER TO AN AGED FRIEND, page 16.

that, although (like the fourth Earl of Chesterfield, whose politeness kept its ascendancy in his death*) they may die like well-bred ladies and gentlemen, extolled by their ignorant admiring friends as patterns of resignation, there can be but little hope in their death as Christians.

Desperate as such a case may be, however, in mortal eyes, nothing is impossible to God, and even *they* MAY find mercy ;

* His biographer says, "Just before his Lordship expired, Mr. Dayrolles was announced. The Earl just found strength enough in a faint voice to say, *Give Mr. Dayrolles a chair*. These were the last words he was heard to speak ; they were very characteristic, and Dr. Warren, who was then in the room, said, *His good breeding only quits him with his life*." Fit panegyric for such a death ! See some interesting particulars of that popular but unhappy nobleman's declining years, in *Letter to an Aged Friend*, at page 39, and at page 101, et seq.

but, although we have an assurance that genuine repentance at the eleventh hour will meet with acceptance, we nowhere find salvation ENSURED when neglected until the *twelfth*, excepting in the solitary instance of the thief on the cross, which being the only one, seems to have been recorded just to prevent despair on the one hand, and presumption on the other; but surely no man in his right senses will leave his soul to such an issue.

Few are ignorant that repentance is necessary, and many seriously intend it, but amuse themselves in a spirit of procrastination, no doubt often fatal to their purpose, and defer it from time to time, until at length, if they be not suddenly called away in their sins, it is perhaps reluctantly wrung from them to quiet

their consciences on a death bed ; but, if their lives and conversation, when in health, have been at variance with the hopeful tokens which then appear, there is reason to doubt their sincerity and efficacy, and to suspect that even, if sincere, they have their origin in a slavish fear of future punishment, rather than a well grounded and lively hope of pardon through the blood of a Redeemer ; and the final state of that man is worse than doubtful.

Of this I had sometime ago a painful illustration, in the experience of a venerable minister of the Established Church, who told me that, of a great many sick and suffering people whom he had attended in his long practice, and had, when stretched on their beds in a helpless state, evinced the most promising

symptoms of repentance and contrition for their mis-spent time when in health, impressing him with the most favourable hopes of their condition, only one of the survivors persevered in a course of amendment.

Let me therefore, humbly but fervently, adjure you, my yet thoughtless, deluded, hoary-headed fellow-sinners, to lay this subject seriously to heart; to "seek the Lord while he may be found, to call upon him while he is near" (Isaiah lv. 6), lest the time come when "no place will be found for repentance, although you seek it carefully with tears" (Heb. xii. 17; Prov. i. 24 to 28); lest, like the foolish virgins, you have to look for oil when the Bridegroom comes, who will then disclaim all knowledge of you! "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day

nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. xxv. 10 to 13). "Seek the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes" (Luke xix. 42). Yesterday is past, and the morrow you may never see; therefore "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

I have not, like Paul, been ordained to the high office of planting, nor of watering, like Apollos; but I have thus put my feeble hand to the plough (Luke ix. 62), and if I shall be honored by Him who "giveth the increase" as the humble instrument of penetrating a barren soil, incrustated in an eighty years' frost, and opening up but one furrow to the rays of the "Sun of Righteousness," and the fertilizing dew of his Gospel, where all had been apparently "reserved to the

blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13), to HIM "who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phill. ii. 13), be all the praise of "delivering you from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. viii. 21).

I hope that, in this summary allusion to the case of those who are still without the pale of that commonwealth, aliens to its delightful—its inestimable privileges and immunities, something may be blessed to them as a word in season; and that, after being so long "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, the middle wall of partition being broken down," they who are now "far off," late as it is, may yet be "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 12, 13, 14);

and in that hope I take leave to subscribe myself,

Dear Friends, far and near,

Your very sincere well-wisher in
the bonds of Christian charity,

A. G.

O, ye that are "far off," OLD and YOUNG, listen to the Gospel invitation! (Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.) See your Saviour's outstretched arms, not fixed in that posture as on the cross, but ready to clasp you to his bosom (Isa. xl. 11). And, for your further encouragement, He says, in John vi. 37, "him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." No, he will not only not cast you out, but will run

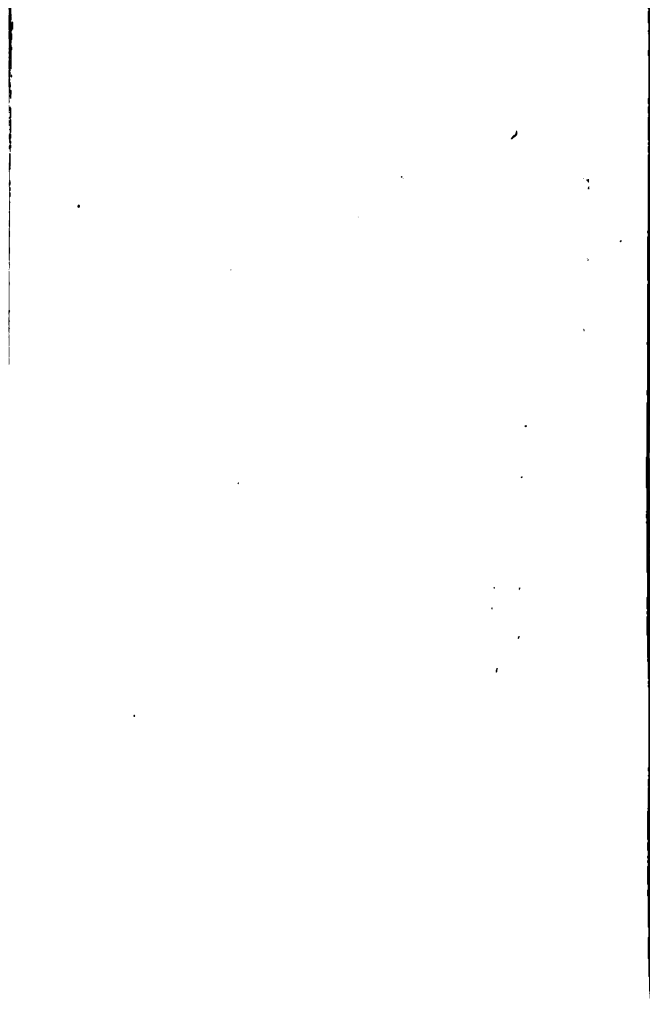
and meet you *a great way off*, as the prodigal's father met his repentant son. See the beautiful and instructive parable in the 15th chapter of St. Luke, from the 11th verse to the end. Therefore,

Go, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of Him.

Lo ! th' incarnate God, ascended,
Pleads the merit of his blood ;
Venture on Him, venture wholly,—
Let no other trust intrude.

A. G.



London, ——— Street, 11th Nov. 1836.

To * * * * *

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been of late, every revolving year, more and more seriously impressed by thoughts of the great change I must soon—very soon—undergo: an awful change to the best man that ever lived—a change from time to eternity—the contemplation of which, would be indeed dreadful to the convinced sinner, did not the same Spirit that carries conviction to his heart and conscience, and

brings him to his knees imploring pardon, at the same time lead him to the foot of the cross, and there shew him remission of all the penalties of the broken and, without the interposition of a Mediator, the merciless law of God.

But the approach of this day, which ushers me into my eighty-second year, thus at length attenuates my life to a hair's breadth, which had long since shrunk from its original span to a hand breadth. It has, for some time past, occupied my mind, to the exclusion of every other thought as much as possible, and not in vain; for I am happily become, under the tuition of One who "teacheth to profit" (Isa. xlviii. 17), so familiar with a subject of all others the most repulsive to most people, that I really know no sensation that deserves the name of cheerfulness, if

not pleasure, but in the meditation of it, with as little intermission as the lawful attention to my trifling secular affairs admits. Every day is now indeed in some measure, a Sabbath to me;—a foretaste of that Sabbath day which will never be invaded by the encroachment of any night.

To refresh my memory, and secure my dispersed occasional reflections on the past, the present, and the future, I committed them to writing as they occurred, and having arranged them as in the accompanying paper, have thrown them into the form of a Letter to your address, of which I request your acceptance, as a small legacy in acknowledgment of the pleasure enjoyed in your long and constant friendship, by one still *in* this world, indeed; but who, on as impartial an examination

of his habitual frame of mind, as he is able to give to such a question, finds reason to conclude, is as little *of* this world as is generally allowed to human infirmity.

Here I may remark one great difference between the man whose mind is *habitually heaven-wards*, and him whose mind is *habitually* on the things of this life. Hastiness of temper, and other specimens of what he is by nature—unbecoming and at variance with his profession, will sometimes appear in the life of the former; and are eagerly marked by the latter, (like “scurvy flies settling upon sores,”*) as tokens that his apparent sanctity and conversation is all hypocrisy; whereas they are only symptoms of that

* Archbishop Leighton.

infirmity, of which we find numberless instances in God's greatest favourites recorded in the Scriptures, to prevent, it would appear, his people of all ages from being unreasonably severe on themselves on such occasions. They are, in short, but specks—foul specks indeed—on a chaste fair ground; *a few tares in a field of wheat—barren spots in a rich soil.*

In the man of the world, occasional fits of devotion and concern for the interests of his soul may be, and perhaps often are, awakened by alarming illness—the death of a friend and the solemnity of his funeral—a searching sermon from the pulpit, or otherwise; but not being “rooted and built up, and established” in him (Col. ii. 7), and being contrary to his *habit*, though sincere at the time, they vanish like the

"morning cloud and early dew" (Hosea xiii. 3), with the occasion which excited them. Archbishop Leighton, in his pithy manner, compares such evanescent excrescences on a soil so uncongenial, to "clusters of grapes *hung* upon a thorn bush, but not *growing* on it." *They are as a few ears of wheat in a field of tares—verdant spots in a desert.*

I have no expectation that, engaged as I know you to be, you can *now* find time or patience to wade through the accompanying scrawl. If you be spared, and in the meantime honor it with a place in your pigeon-hole, you may perhaps read it by and bye more conveniently. The subject of it is the oil of another life; which ill accords with the turbid restless waters of this, in which we all are doomed to dabble more or less while it lasts; but,

Oh, for a closer walk with God,
 A calm and heavenly frame,
 A light to shine upon the road,
 That leads us to the Lamb.

The dearest idol we have known,
 Whate'er that idol be,
 Help us to tear it from thy throne,
 And worship only Thee.

So shall our walk be close with God,
 Calm and serene our frame ;
 So purer light shall mark the road
 That leads us to the Lamb.

You will be much better off than me, if at my time of life you can look *behind* you with any complacency ; but I cannot prefer a better wish for you, than that you may *then*, if not *sooner*, have as much comfort in looking *before* you as has been imparted to me, out of the grand store-house of all comfort—even the tender bowels of the loving Redeemer of lost mankind ; to whose name be ascribed all honour

and glory, might, majesty, and dominion,
now and for ever ! Amen.

In that hope, I have the pleasure of
subscribing myself,

My dear Friend,

Yours in Christian regard,

A. G.

London, ——— Street, 11th Nov. 1836.

"AND THIS DAY SHALL BE UNTO YOU FOR A
MEMORIAL." (Exodus xii. 14.)

To * * * * *

MY DEAR FRIEND,

So spake Moses to the children of Israel on the institution of the Passover; and this day is to me a *memorial* of my having passed that period of life which he also says, in the 10th verse of the 90th Psalm, is weariness of both body and mind,—that period of life which Barzillai pleaded as an excuse for declining David's invitation to accompany him to

Jerusalem, on his return from his temporary expulsion by his son Absalom's rebellion.

"I am this day," he says, "fourscore years old, and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men, and singing women? Wherefore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?"(a) Oh how feelingly and experimentally do I now subscribe to the truth of what they both say of eighty! having, by the guidance of an unseen Hand, which led me,

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
And gently cleared my way;
Through all the pleasing snares of vice,
More to be feared than they ;

(a) 2 Sam. xix. 35.

from infancy to childhood; from childhood to adolescence; from adolescence to youth; from youth to manhood; and from manhood to old age, been tenderly reared and spared to enter my *eighty-second* year this day. David, in penning the 23d Psalm, expresses his trust that goodness and mercy *would follow* him all the days of his life. Goodness and mercy *have followed* me all the days of a life already eleven years longer than David attained; and by being enabled to hold fast the Lord's repeated promise, that he will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him, I have every faith that goodness and mercy will follow me to the last.

This day is also a *memorial* to me of broken sabbaths without number, desecrated by the most wanton profanation;*

* —mocking its divine institution by a formal at-

a memorial, of every species of indignity offered to the Majesty of Heaven, and defiance of his holy law at every step,—of a worm trifling with that God who is a consuming fire (Heb. xii. 29.); spurning the authority of Him “whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain”; (*b*)—*a memorial*, in fine, of a life of no ordinary duration, degraded by the blackest ingratitude for slighted mercies, countless as the sands; aggravated by a total dis-

tendance at public worship, or neglecting it altogether; idle visits, or receiving idle visitors; worldly conversation, and closing the wearisome day in a worldly dinner party; where any one who disturbed the prevailing hilarity, by putting in a word in any way conformable to the solemnity of the day, would have been thought singular, and perhaps marked for future exclusion on such social occasions. The sabbath was then as tiresome a day to me, as it seems to have been to the Israelites in the prophet Amos's time (chap. viii. 5).

(*b*) 1 Kings viii. 27.

regard of the means graciously provided by redeeming love for obtaining pardon, notwithstanding its enormity. Well might I have *then* reproached myself (as, in my daily experience, I *still* feel but too just a reproof) in the words of Absalom to Hushai, whom he affected to blame for deserting David, "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" Through all this long reign of darkness, when conscience tried to edge in a word, I satisfied myself with the miserable consolation, that I was not worse than my neighbours; and, speaking after the manner of man, perhaps better than some. An earthly friend, treated with such contempt and ingratitude, would soon have discarded me; but not so the Lord's ways. Isaiah lv. 8, 9.

It is also a *memorial* of God's sovereign pleasure to open my eyes to a view of the

tremendous precipice on which I was thus tottering, and the bottomless gulph yawning beneath me,—choosing the tragical death of my friend, Mr. Fauntleroy, on the 30th of November, 1824,* for the display of his gracious purpose. The thoughtless career, to which I had been so long abandoned, then received its first check; and “the day dawn of grace (c) —the day spring from on high,” (d) broke on my benighted soul, rousing me from the “sleep of death” (e) in which I had been slumbering. As was the case with the blind man on Jesus’s first touch of his eyes, who “saw men as trees walking,” (f) my vision was at first confused and ob-

(c) 2 Pet. i. 19; (d) Luke i. 78; (e) Psalm xiii. 3; (f) Mark viii. 24.

* See LETTER TO AN AGED FRIEND, page 57, et seq.

scure; but the transforming influence of the power then at work gradually dispelled the mist, shewing me my need of a Saviour, and directing me to the foot of the cross. The process of regeneration, of resuscitation from spiritual death, then commenced in humiliation before my offended Maker: "repentance I hope not to be repented of," (*g*) and sincere sorrow for having so long and so criminally abused his patience with me, which must have been exhausted at an early period of my wicked life had he not been "slow to anger, and of great kindness; (*h*) long suffering, and keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." (*i*) Nature, however, as

(*g*) 2 Cor. vii. 10; (*h*) Neh. ix. 17; (*i*) Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.

may be supposed, was not idle all this while, and for some time waged a war with her new assailant, which was for awhile apparently doubtful; but sin, which had reigned so long with undisputed sway, was finally dethroned: nevertheless, I am painfully reminded at times that "the Canaanite is not driven out"; and that sin, although conquered, and its *tyranny* at an end, is not subdued; no, it still "abounds," lurking indeed but restless, requiring the vigilance of superabounding grace to detect and repel its treacherous sallies. The solution of the following paradox, which would have been formerly enigmatical, thus became obvious:—

How strange is the course that a Christian must
steer,
How perplexed is the path he must tread;
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead!

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
 And his best resolutions be crost,
 Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
 Till he finds himself utterly lost !

When all this is done, and his heart is assur'd
 Of the total remission of sins;
 When his pardon is sign'd, and his peace is procur'd,
 From that moment his conflict begins.

So St. Paul found it : while he was a Pharisee, he thought himself blameless (Philip. iii. 6); everything went smooth with him till his conversion; then his warfare commenced; and we find in the 7th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, how it was raging six and twenty years afterwards, and no doubt to the end of his life. So it is with the *proud moralist*, and the humble *Christian*, at the present day.

It is also a *memorial* of the Lord's compassionate manner with me, in this

transition from a state of nature to a state of grace, through which he was pleased to guide me in the silken cords of pity. I was restless, however, and visited with deep compunction, serious alarm, and intense anxiety,—devouring with insatiable avidity some books treating of my case on the authority of the inspired volume, which a pious and judicious friend presented to me; but was all along exempted from those floods of bitter tears, and those pangs of a wounded spirit, which I found in my reading had attended the new birth in some others. As to this, all I can say is, that my heavenly Father, for reasons with which I have nothing to do, for “his own name’s sake,” and that alone most probably, certainly for nothing in me, has not thought it necessary to mani-

fest himself to his adopted child by such painful evidence as he deemed requisite in other cases, for which I laud and magnify his glorious name accordingly. "Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou?" (Isaiah xlv. 9.)

This day is also a *memorial* to me of the advantages which age possesses over thoughtless youth. It is, even when exempted from suffering and disease, generally accompanied by a decay of sight or hearing, often of both; feeble knees, tremulous hands; relaxation of all the muscular and nervous system; languor of the animal spirits, once so buoyant; numbness, even to aversion, to all those sensual enjoyments to which youth and middle age, when in health, are so keenly aliye. The hoary pilgrim is thus told, in language which he that runs may read,

that "he has no continuing city here, and that he is to look for one to come."(*k*) These are warnings which youth has not; and if the improvement of them be neglected, we are deservedly amenable to the consequences.

I had lately a lamentable instance of what, judging from appearances, seems to be a prevailing indifference to the consequences of such neglect. Remonstrating with a neighbouring shopkeeper, a person well advanced in years, on her profanation of the sabbath, by trading on that day (in articles of mere amusement), she said, rather flippantly, she could not afford to shut up her shop on Sunday; and, when I told her a day would come when such an excuse would be of no

(*k*) Heb. xiii. 14.

avail, she replied, with a smile on her countenance, "*Oh, I must take my chance of that!*" What a sample is here of un-renewed nature! Would my neighbour were the only one in that state! But I know very few, even among those who have not shops to mind, but have all the bounties of Providence poured into their lap, who are not leaving the question, as to the condition of their souls and the concerns of futurity, as much at issue as my unhappy neighbour.

And an old man, whom I have long known on the most friendly terms, being with me on some business a few days ago, I took the opportunity of sounding him as to his views, hopes, or fears of futurity, now he was so near entering on eternity; but could not draw anything intelligible from him. I tried him all ways

that I could think of, but, to my utter amazement, could get nothing from him but a stupid vacant stare, as much as to say—what can the man mean? At length, by way of forcing some answer from him, grasping his arm familiarly and looking in his face with an enquiring eye to rivet his attention, I asked him whether he was conscious of having ever thought, or said, or done anything to offend God? He seemed thunderstruck by the question; and, after a pause, to my perfect astonishment, muttered out, *Nothing particular that I know of*. I found it difficult to trust my ears. This man, now in his eighty-fourth year, has passed through that long life with an irreproachable character in the eyes of his fellow-men, esteemed for his probity in the affairs of this world, but would appear

never to have bestowed a thought on another! How scrupulously attentive is this class of people to the means for ensuring certainty in all they hope for as to the concerns of their few years in this life, leaving those of eternity to the winds! with the means abundantly supplied, and freely offered for attaining more assurance in the latter than they ever can have in the former; in which they may plan, but an over-ruling Providence executes without any regard to their devices, as this octogenarian has lived to discover experimentally in his own case. Here is another taking his chance in the crowd, in spite of all warning from his great age.

There is indeed no want of warnings in their Bibles; but that book, perhaps, is deposited on the shelf, carefully wrapped up from dust and moth, and seldom dis-

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their chance, what can be said or thought of them, but that they consider these passages (in which seem condensed all the threatenings dispersed through the Scriptures,) to be unmeaning declamation, and go on regardless both of threats and promises—undismayed by the one, nor cheered by the other—in a course of thoughtlessness, bigoted to a system and convenient creed of their own, in which the terrors of the Law, and the hopes of the Gospel,—the love of God, and hatred of sin,—their need of a Saviour, and their obligations to a Redeemer,—the agony of both body and soul which he suffered for them in the garden and on the cross, are perhaps introduced parenthetically, if they have any place at all.

The following **paraphrase** (by the late

Dr. Watts) of the portion of the Proverbs above referred to, cannot well be surpassed by any uninspired pen. Few compositions of that sort approach so close to the terrific grandeur of the divine original.

But since so long, with earnest voice,
To you in vain I call,—
Since all my counsels and reproofs
Thus ineffectual fall ;

The time will come when, humbled low,
In sorrow's evil day,
Your voice by anguish shall be taught,
But taught too late, to pray.

When, like the whirlwind o'er the deep,
Comes desolation's blast ;
Pray'rs then extorted shall be vain,
The hour of mercy past !

I have not been criticising these *take my chance* Christians from mere fancy. I have been drawing a sketch, every fea-

ture of which, and much more equally ill-favoured, was to be found in my own portrait formerly; and however varnished it may be in some of decent exterior, walking circumspectly and even praiseworthily before their fellow men, the colours are the same in all while under the bondage of their natural state, until they "receive of the things of the Spirit of God," which the Apostle says, and says truly, are "foolishness to the natural man, who cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.). But how hard a thing it is to persuade those nominal Christians, that they are in a state of nature, or even to open out to their apprehension, the difference between a state of nature and a state of grace! In vain are they referred to the authority of God's word. Each ques-

tions its application to his specific case ; and makes his own creed the compass, by which he steers clear of, or runs down every thing in it that opposes his course. He impugns the correctness of our version of the inspired writings, where it makes God (as he thinks) too hard upon him.* I have heard doubts expressed as to the strictness of the law, especially regarding the sabbath being enjoined for *our* observance in these *enlightened times*. I can speak, from my own expe-

* I was lately much affected at finding a dear and much esteemed friend clinging to that broken reed, on my calling his attention to the Scriptures, in the book of Proverbs above quoted. Let such beware, lest they be of the number of those whom St. Peter speaks of (2 Pet. iii. 16), *the unlearned and unstable, who wrest some of St. Paul's writings, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

rience, to the dark and unsatisfactory state of that man's mind, having *myself* formerly tried to find a screen on such occasions, in the same sophistical expedients—but in vain. I still winced—the voice of conscience would be heard, which in the same breath whispered, *thou knowest that it is a mere subterfuge*, as your progenitor Adam found his excuse to be—"the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, tempted me, and I did eat" (Genesis iii. 12); thus indirectly attempting to implicate his Maker in his transgression; but this was only of a piece with my own profane idea in my libertine days, that it was absurd to think that God had invested me with passions, without the privilege of indulging them, or gifted me with reason, only to be exercised within certain bounds. Yet, all

through this maze of error and ignorance, something about *mercy* is perhaps now and then thought of, and may find its way faintly to the lips, but the claims of *justice* never dreamt of.

Painfully sluggish, as I too often am in many of my duties, even my prayers not unfrequently a task, I am happily under less restraint in praise and thanksgiving, in which I have generally more liberty; can this be that I am more alive to a sense of what the Lord has already done for me, than I am to what he has promised, and so equally secure, though yet only in prospect? I hope not; but the heart is deceitful above all things; who can know it? (Jeremiah xvii. 9.) However this may be, I here lay down my pen to adore that goodness, which, after leaving me to *take my chance*

so many years, has at length unfolded to me a sense of having obtained a personal interest in the atonement of the cross, unchecked by any current running counter to that ineffable comfort, that can be called doubt. This I am aware would be miscalled presumption, fanaticism, and what not? by those who are still for *taking their chance*, and ready to charge me with Jeshurun's sin—(Duet. xxxii. 15) if they knew enough of their bibles to know what that was.

But this is their lamentable ignorance. They cannot well be without some notion of God's prerogative, but they know nothing of the Christian's privileges ; of the delightful fellowship and communion with Him, which he not only admits them to, but presses upon them;—of the occasional exstacy of only an uplifted eye,

with an *Abba Father*; or ejaculating with enraptured Thomas, *my Lord and my God!* when more free utterance is denied. They deride the idea (even stigmatizing it as enthusiastic, if not impious) of any one being assured that he is an heir of salvation. It is true all believers have not that comfort unalloyed, but it is attainable. St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews (x. 22), exhorts them to “draw near with a true heart, in *full assurance of faith*” (as elsewhere in the Scriptures); and he would not have expected an impossibility from them.

We have no authorized definition of the unpardonable sin, and there are consequently various opinions respecting it. I have also my opinion, and although far from me be all pretensions to settle a question, as to which the apostles, “his

ministers, and stewards of his mysteries," (1 Corinthians iv. 1) have left us in the dark, I would, in all humility say, that for the child of God to allow his peace to be invaded, in despite of his experience of his new birth, and his growth in stature (which he cannot miss to know), appears to me to betray a degree of unbelief—a backwardness to the *trust* required of him not far removed from it. That I am but little, if at all, disturbed on that score,

Oh ! to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrain'd to be ;
Let that grace now like a fetter,
Bind my wand'ring heart to thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love,
Here's my heart—oh ! take and seal it,
Seal it from thy court above.

I have, indeed, known it asserted, that

he who never doubted, never believed; and, after all that can be said, it is perhaps only the rooted infidel with his heart of "adamant stone"—(Zechariah vii. 12) who has the unenvied advantage of being at no time infested with any tincture of doubt. Yet that dull frame, when the sun is behind a cloud, which the believer (puzzled for a word to describe it), if required to give it a name, calls *doubt*, because it is not faith, is, in a majority of instances, rather a temporary suspension of the active exercise of faith; as I think may be safely inferred, when there is no clear conviction, or sense of distrust. The believer, therefore, should not fret, because, (to borrow a phrase from MR. HOOKER'S* discourse on the

* A divine of the sixteenth century, who died in the

Perpetuity of faith in the elect) he is not always *walking arm in arm with angels*.

We are commanded to “seek first the

year 1600, at the early age of 46; generally distinguished, when reference is made to his name and writings, by the epithets *learned and judicious*. Of *doubting* he says, “the minds of all men being so darkened as they are with the foggy damp of original corruption, it cannot be that any man’s heart living should be either so enlightened in the knowledge, or established in the love, of that wherein his salvation standeth, as to be perfect,—neither doubting or shrinking at all;” cautioning all who lay claim to perfection in that respect, “to beware that, in challenging to themselves a strength which they have not, they lose the comfortable support of that weakness which they have.” Much of the spirit of the same theory pervades Dr. Owen’s admired and deeply interesting exposition of the 130th Psalm; Mr. Guthrie’s *Christian’s Great Interest*, and also the writings of other *noble Bereans*. Acts xvii. 10, 11.

If, in opposition to this, it be alleged that Abraham *believed and did not doubt*, Mr. Hooker very properly answers—“That Abraham was not void of all doubting, what need we any other proof than the plain evidence of his own words, in Genesis xvii. 17,” against a positive promise from God in the 16th

kingdom of God, and his righteousness," with an assurance that a supply of all our temporal wants will follow. But how

verse; but that was not through *unbelief*. (Rom. iv. 20.) We find similar instances of *weakness* in that *father of the faithful*, in Genesis xii. 10 to 13; and in the first fourteen verses of the 20th chapter; as was also the case with Isaac, as we are told in the 26th chapter, from the 6th to the 9th verse; and so with David, as related in the 20th and 21st chapters of the first book of Samuel, and the first verse of the 27th chapter, and other Old Testament saints, patriarchs, psalmists, and prophets; to all which may be added, the memorable instance of Peter's faith failing him in the very act of complying with an invitation from Jesus in person, and in his presence (Matt. xiv. 30, 31); on which occasion his Master's tender reproof, "O thou of little faith, (not, O thou unbeliever,) wherefore didst thou doubt?" clearly justifies the believer in ascribing to his *infirmity* everything in him of the nature of doubt, and in nowise inconsistent with *full assurance*, or any let or hindrance to it, although he may not always have the comfort of knowing it to be so; his doubts are essentially different from the movements of the seared conscience of the infidel.

The conclusion of the whole question is, that there

many—few indeed, who do not—busy themselves in first seeking the latter, taking their chance for the former! Among other excuses for thus reversing the divine injunction from the lips of our blessed Saviour himself (Matthew vi. 32, 33), some find a plea in an unhappy state of discord in their families, from which they cannot withdraw their minds sufficiently for meditation; others plead the press of their worldly concerns, which will not allow them time—they must mind the main chance they say;—but in as far as these are stumbling blocks in their way, none can be more

is a tide in faith which, like other tides, is not always at high water, but whether ebbing or flowing, and even at low water, is always FAITH in the true believer; and he knows what is said of faith, if it be but as *a grain of mustard seed*. Matt. xvii. 20.

obstructed by them, than David was,—and not many (not one in private life) are exposed to so much suffering from both, as he must have endured.

His domestic affliction, after he came to the throne, began (as far as we know) in the fourteenth year of his reign, and the forty-fourth of his age, with his being despised by his wife Michal, Saul's daughter (2 Samuel vi. 16). We find no record of any particular inroad on his domestic peace for eight years afterwards, but we have then, in the 13th chapter, a heart-rending account of a dreadful scene of incest and murder among his children; and ten years afterwards he was driven from his throne, for about a year, by the rebellion of his favourite son, abetted by the treachery of his chief counsellor, as related in the 15th

chapter. These trials fell upon him, indeed, at distant periods, but their effect must have been working on his mind in the intervals, and with most people would have suppressed all thought of anything else.

But not so with David; for although he had during this time of mental suffering, and under such a cloud of adversity, all the affairs—political, judicial, and financial, of a great nation in his hands, and almost constantly embroiled in war with the neighbouring nations, judging from his constancy in the service of both the temple and the closet, if we did not know how his attention was distracted, we should conclude he had given up his mind and the whole of his time to that alone. At length however we find him, at the age of only sixty-eight, drooping under such an accumulation of care and

anxiety, and discarding all heed of regal pomp and grandeur, of his earthly crown and sceptre, reverting to and tenderly bewailing the unhappy state of his household, which it would seem, but for the everlasting covenant God had made with him, and in which he trusted, must have immersed him in despondency (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), and finally sinking in death in his seventy-first year, under all the physical infirmities of extreme old age. 1 Kings i. 1 to 4, and the 10th verse of the second chapter.

The Lord has reserved witnesses to himself even in this metropolis—this sink of vice and profligacy,—a remnant who do not bow the knee to Baal,*—many who, if called upon, would as joyfully lay down

* Romans xi. 4.

their lives for the truth as it is in Jesus, as Stephen did in the year his beloved Master suffered, and Bradford and his fellow-martyrs in the sixteenth century; shining counterparts of David's zeal for the honour of God and the coming of his kingdom, and equally eminent as men of business, and active members of society, who, by obeying the apostle's injunctions to do "all things decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40), find time for all their temporal concerns, without neglecting "the one thing needful." But as the fashion is, with all those who are for taking their chance, to brand as hypocrites or deride as enthusiasts, others whose lives and conversation become their Christian profession, and "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called" (Eph. iv. 1), David's example is pre-

ferred for the imitation of busy worldly people, as less exposed to such imputations; and with that example before him, and the same means of grace within his reach, the busiest man of the present day is left without excuse for neglecting anything that relates either to "this life, or that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Deaf as I am, the warnings of old age make themselves heard; and, among other mercies, it has been given to me to improve them to my unspeakable comfort here, and I am encouraged to hope to my happiness hereafter. If my knees totter under me in ascending to the apartment allotted for my *nightly rest*, while others are vaulting up to theirs with the agility of roes, I know I shall distance many of the fleetest of them in mounting to my *eternal rest*. Their more elastic

muscular powers, in which they have at present the advantage of me, will be of no avail in climbing that hill, steep of ascent and difficult to all,—to those who trust in their own strength, insurmountable. The new man, the spiritual man, gathers strength and compactness, and is “renewed day by day,” while these infirmities (of which the tremour of these shrivelled obstinate fingers is now reminding me) are crumbling his clay-built cottage to its original dust; the leaf indeed is withering, but the fruit is ripening; the old time-battered shell is frittering to pieces, but letting in, through every chink, more fragrance to the kernel; and I can truly say, without any hesitation or reservation, that the present is, beyond all comparison, far the happiest period of my life; “the good wine it seems

has been kept until now," (1) for, on comparing the present with the past, I find that I never knew happiness before; having thus discovered that the attractions of the theatre, the gaieties of the ball room, and, in fine, all the delights of my former life, were only fascinating snares, bedizened and disguised in the meretricious garb of pleasure. Iron and clay* may as easily be amalgamated, as such pursuits, and their usual frivolous adjuncts, with any state that a sober well-regulated mind, or as the apostle has it, *the spirit of a sound mind*, would take to be happiness, or in any way allied to it.

Go, man of pleasure, strike the lyre,
Of broken sabbaths sing the charms;
Mine be the prophet's cart of fire,
That bears me to a Father's arms.

(1) John ii. 10. * Dan. xi. 33, 42. † 2 Kings ii. 11.

This day thus becomes a *memorial* unto me that, while others were "rejoicing in their youth, and their hearts cheered in the days of their youth," mine were "evil days," in which I said, "I have no pleasure in them"; and that *now*, when those cloudy days have overtaken such of the former as are still "walking in the ways of their hearts, and in the sight of their eyes," (Eccles. xi. 9, and xii. 1,) "the oil of joy has been appointed unto me for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa. lxi. 3). Thus, while they are unconsciously drinking "the waters of Marah," in their natural state, the tree that sweetens them (Exodus xv. 23 to 25) has been discovered to me; so that I can neither look in nor look out, without finding in every thing in and about me im-

perative calls for gratitude; and so sweet, feeble as they be, are my poor attempts at thankfulness, that I am sometimes near being tempted to suspect something of a selfish nature in them.

When all thy mercies, O, my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

Oh! how shall words, with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare
That glows within my ravish'd heart,—
But thou canst read it there.

This day is also a *memorial* to me of having been emancipated from the school of Moses, where I heard nothing but the merciless denunciations of the law,* and

* We have, in the book of *Numbers* (xv. 32 to 36), an account of a man who was found gathering some sticks on the Sabbath day, who was carried before Moses and the congregation, that they might judge whether his offence amounted to *working* on the Sab-

translated to the gladdening school of the Gospel, which teaches and preaches forgiveness and remission of the sins of even

bath day, and so *breaking the Sabbath*; but as the law, it seems, was not thought sufficiently explicit on the point, he was placed under restraint until that could be determined; and we may conclude that Moses consulted the will of God on the occasion (although we are not told so); for we find, "the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp"; and he was stoned to death, "as the Lord commanded Moses."

Compare the above narrative with the case of the woman taken in adultery, and its results, as adjudged by the compassionate Jesus himself; of which we have an interesting circumstantial detail in the gospel according to St. John, from the 3d to the 11th verse of the eighth chapter. The punishment awarded by the law to that woman's crime, was the same kind of death as the Sabbath breaker was doomed to suffer.

What could a folio volume say more than these two little narratives, in contrasting the thunder of Mount Sinai with the repose of the Mount of Olives!—the unflinching rigour of the law, with the merciful am-

such an one as I have been, working finally, after a long and often renewed respite, a plenary discharge from every penalty I had incurred. Instead of my former recreation in parks and gardens, I now find exercise more refreshing and never wearisome, in joining the triumphant procession from Bethphage into Jerusalem; afterwards to the supper room; from that sorrowful repast to the Mount of Olives; and thence (after halting on the banks of the Kedron during his sweet intercession, John xvii.) accompanying the blessed Jesus through all the ago-

nesty of the gospel. The late Mr. Romaine, of pious memory, who, "being dead, yet speaketh" (Heb. xi. 4), to the delight of all who have *hearing ears, and understanding hearts*, in one of his letters says, "If I had been only in the school of Moses to learn, I should, with such views of sin, have hanged myself long ago, but in the school of Christ, &c. &c. &c."

nizing and humiliating circumstances of the ensuing scene at Gethsemane; thence with the ruffian band and their illustrious prisoner to the high priest's house, and on the following day to the judgment hall; continuing my attendance on the immaculate victim of self-devotion to the will of *his* Father and *my* Father, until our progress is fatally arrested at Calvary, where he redeems the merciful pledge given by his Father to apostate Adam, by submitting himself to an ignominious and excruciating death; then and there opening that fountain of water to cleanse, and of blood to atone,*

* Archbishop Leighton, in his sermon on the third verse of the first chapter of the Song, in alluding to that dreadful scene, observes that it was love, and not the nails, that held Him fast on the cross, when the ruthless spectators tauntingly bid him come down.

on which I rely with a serene hope that
now—

The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood
Hiding all my transgressions from view.

And having, on the same foundation that St. Paul laid, though without arrogating his judgment as a builder, been long engaged in constructing the arch of faith, I am now "going on my way rejoicing with the eunuch," (*m*) intent on moulding the key-stone, ready to be dropped into its place when the signal shall be given; never with any reluctance in its anticipation, and sometimes, I would fain think, longing for it. But here I am afraid to trust myself; and yet why should I not? for the "Sun of Righteousness having

(*m*) Acts viii. 39.

arisen on me with healing in his wings," (n) I have (according to John v. 24, and 1 John iii. 14,) passed from death unto life," irrevocably closing with, and irretrievably surrendering myself to the grand device of salvation through the " Lord my strength and my Redeemer," (o) even JESUS CHRIST, and through Him alone. The compact is " sealed with the King's ring," (p) and deposited with Him who "I am persuaded is able to keep that which I have committed to him against *that day*," (q) to all which I have a witness whose testimony I cannot discredit; and while inspired with horror at the retrospect of what I have escaped, I am transported by the hope on which I now repose, that *heir of hell* as I was, heaven

(n) Malachi iv. 2; (o) Psalm xix. 14; (p) Esther iii. 12; (q) 2 Tim. i. 12.

in reversion is at length secured to me, and that when called up for judgment, I shall find a Friend on the Bench, who will put me in possession of my inheritance. But "how hard a thing it is to exercise faith when we have most need of it? and how sad a thing it is that, when we have most need of the Lord's presence and help, we should then especially grieve him with our doubts and distrusts! However, (as the frail Old Testament saints had in their day) we have this to comfort us, that when the Lord sees faith in sincerity, he will pardon its infirmity."* Lord, help my unbelief! that flagrant sin against a promise keeping God, which would mar all my comforts, as they regard the things of

* Mason's Select Remains.

both time and eternity, were I not graciously favoured with the permanent comfort of being enabled to cling habitually to "the Rock that is higher than I" (Psalm lxi. 2), and to repose confidently on a covenant God in Christ, the author and finisher of my faith (Heb. xii. 2), out of whom are the issues of the only real comfort at every period of life; but its intrinsic value is perhaps only fully appreciated when those creature comforts, formerly so relished, pall on the fastidious, jaded palate of the aged and experienced Christian, although it is no less the inheritance of both old and young, who love him and trust in him as

Their Shepherd, their Husband, their Friend,
 Their Saviour from sin and from thrall;
 Their hope from beginning to end,
 Their portion, their Lord, and their all.

Renouncing all hope of the blessedness

of "those who die in the Lord," on any thing I do, or can do:—my often wandering and heartless prayers—my alms deeds and other charities—my polluted offerings in my closet and in the sanctuary; on my bed and at my family altar—in short, disclaiming all merit in these means, naturally so gratifying, as "vain oblations" (Isai. i. 13); what Mr. NEWTON* familiarly designates as the works of a watch without the main spring;—denying all this "self-righteousness as a vain attempt to scale the bulwarks of heaven by a ladder of my own construction, I trust solely in the meritorious death of a crucified, risen, and ascended Jesus, now making intercession for me, and am hardly at liberty to doubt that, by the cheering whispers of the "still small voice" (r) from the

* Author of the *Cardiphonia*, *Omicron*, &c.

(r) 1 Kings xix. 12.

world of spirits, to "trust and not be afraid," (s) I shall have the comfort of hailing my last hour—that eventful hour, which indeed excludes all further opportunity of repenting, but at the same time shuts out all further risk of sinning, as

Far the happiest hour by man
Experienced here below ;
The hour that terminates his span,
His folly and his woe.—
So sings the Christian—firm possess
Of faith's supporting rod ;
Then breathes his soul into its rest,
The bosom of his God !

Here I am reminded of a dream I had some years ago. I was reviewing my past sinful life, brooding over its guilt, and literally groaning under a sense of its enormity as unpardonable. In this train of meditation, I had just come to a crisis

(s) Isaiah xii. 2.

bordering on despair; and never shall I forget a deep-toned voice, as if through a trumpet from the right hand corner of the ceiling of my room, calling out to me at that moment—*trust in God*; and I awoke, actually attempting to articulate an answer, in the words—*I will trust*, which I completed on being fully awake. I was not, at the instant of awaking, satisfied that I had been dreaming, and that the voice did not proceed from some one in the room; but I well remember re-composing myself to sleep in a delicious frame of mind, as if relieved from an intolerable burden; and, in the animation of the moment, applied to my own case the gracious words of Jesus to the paralytic—"Son, be of good cheer—thy sins be forgiven thee." (t)

(t) Matt. ix. 2.

I have an eight-day clock that stands on a bracket at the bottom of the stairs. I one night dreamt I was coming down, and, to my utter amazement, saw it in a posture of falling down sideways, and more than half inclined over the edge of the bracket; the glass front open and hanging by one of the hinges, the other being broken—both hands on the floor and at some distance from each other. I stood aghast at the scene; and, gazing on the ruin in silent awe, the first thought that occurred to me was, that there must be an unseen hand *at that clock*—a mysterious, unknown power counteracting the law of gravitation, and sustaining it in so perilous an attitude. That wreck therefore, I thought, cannot be the work of human hands, nor the effect of what is commonly called accident; it must be,

neither more nor less than a message from the ETERNAL, advertising me that my time is at an end, or nearly so. How I should have been impressed by such a vision (if it made any impression at all), in the days of my unregeneracy, I know not; but I well remember receiving so unexpected an intimation with great solemnity, as well I might, although without any alarm; and, rivetted to the spot where I stood, composing myself for meditation. I have no distinct recollection of what followed. I rather think I was disappointed by waking without making any further progress; but the scene, viewing it as I did, took a strong hold, and it has not been without its use; for, to this day, I endeavour, and not without a good measure of success, to take my serenity on that occasion as a happy

earnest of similar resignation at the hour thus prefigured. I am counting the hours till it comes, so that it cannot come *unexpected*; and O! *my God and Father!* my *Jesus!* thou *Son of David!* thou "*Lamb of God* that takest away the sins of the world," in thy "loving kindness," of which I have already shared so bountifully—in thy *mercy!* of which I am now a signal monument—enable me in the meantime to triumph, "nothing wavering," (James i. 6) in the assurance that, clothed in a wedding garment hiding every scarlet and crimson stain (Isaiah i. 18), it will not, and *cannot*, find me *unprepared!* O! my FATHER! in thy pity *keep every doubt on that head averted from me.*

I do not think I have overstepped the bounds of caution, in admitting other dreams I have had to a considerable de-

gree of influence; for, whatever may be thought of the authority of dreams in general, when I find God saying "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions (Joel ii. 28); and as he neither *says*, nor *does* any thing in vain, and formerly made known his mind to the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles; by dreams and visions, I see no good reason why we should not conclude that he will continue to commune with his people of all ages, in the same manner, when he sees occasion for any special manifestation to them; and, on the above occasion, I could not, nor can I now, resist the conviction, that the voice of God was in it. If my interpretation be objected to because some years have elapsed, and I am

here yet, I would answer that I certainly expected to be called before now; but God does not compute time as man does. A thousand years are, in his sight, but as yesterday when it is past (Psalm xc. 4). He makes so light of time, that St. Peter says, *one day is with him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Among other precious gifts, I have, after those alternations of light and shade, which I understand are generally found to diversify such a pursuit, attained the unspeakable comfort of *impregnable* faith in the whole word of God—from Genesis to the Revelation; which I have gone through several times within these few years past, and have there found peace not as the world giveth—that peace which was bequeathed to

his people by the Divine Testator—that pearl of great price which the world knows nothing of—firmly believing all that has been brought down to a level with my understanding, by my Divine teacher; wherein I find all that essentially and practically relates to salvation clearly revealed as in a sun beam to the humble self-denying inquirer. I see something more as “through a glass darkly (*t t*), and in all humility adore what is *yet* hid in impenetrable mystery from me, and from others far more learned—reserved as “the secret things that belong to *God* (*u*). St. Peter says, even of his *beloved* brother Paul’s writings, that there are some things *in them* hard to be understood. The learned and

(*tt*) 1 Cor. xiii. 12; (*u*) Deut. xxix. 29.

enlightened Archbishop Leighton, (of Glasgow, in Charles II.'s time) freely confesses his ignorance of the import of many texts of Scripture; and it must be so with all his brethren, although the pride of human learning may keep some of them back from so frank an acknowledgment of their ignorance. They are men, he says, that "had rather be learned, than holy, and have more mind to the tree of knowledge, than the tree of life." And, of the passages in St. Paul's writings to which St. Peter alludes, he says, that "the best way to understand the mysterious and high discourse in the beginning of St. Paul's epistles, is to begin at the practice of those rules and precepts that are in the latter end of them." He further observes in general on this subject—"it is

true that there be dark and deep passages in Scripture for the exercise, yea for the humbling, yea for the amazing of the sharpest sighted readers; but this argues much of the pride and vanity of men's minds, when they busy themselves only in *these*, and throw aside altogether the most necessary, which are therefore the *easiest and the plainest truths* in it."

But perhaps we may be allowed, without incurring the charge of presumption, to scan the *motives* by the *results* of some of the decrees of Jehovah, when the relations of cause to effect approach the margin of human reason. Archbishop Leighton, who was not given to soaring in the region of mystery, sometimes indulged a vein this way.

In his commentary on the 10th verse of the 2d chapter of St. Peter's first

epistle, he observes that the apostle draws the attention of believers to reflect on their former misery, and to view it together with their present state, as, he further observes, is frequently done in the Scriptures.

He says—"it is of very great use, it works the soul of a Christian to much humility and love, and thankfulness, and obedience; it cannot choose but to force him to abase himself, and to magnify the free grace and love of God. And *this may be one reason* why it pleases the Lord to suspend the conversion of some persons for many years of their life—yea to suffer them to stain those years with grievous and gross sins, in order that the riches and glory of his grace, and freeness of his choice, may be much more legible to themselves and

others." Such, *to a letter*, have been the Lord's ways with me, having left me to *my own* ways for sixty-nine years of my life; and, in looking round among my friends and acquaintances, whom, in his sovereign will, he has yet left in darkness, such *to a letter*, were my frequent meditations on the grace vouchsafed to me, before the Archbishop's hypothesis occurred.

At these times I have often thought that there can be nothing incompatible with God's boundless compassion for his erring creatures, and his consideration for their infirmities (but the reverse) in supposing that, in *my* particular case, he may have been pleased to defer conversion to a time when the opposition of nature would be fainter; when the tumult of passions which formerly beset me

had subsided into a comparative calm ; and that, although the work would have been as easy at the most boisterous period of my life to him who "ruleth the raging of the sea" (Psalm lxxxix. 9), yet that he kindly delayed it till he saw it was easier to me ; mercifully keeping the "everlasting arms"—(Duet. xxxiii. 27) under me till the appointed time—

When Jesus found me as a stranger,
 Wand'ring from the fold of God ;
 And to rescue me from danger,
 Interpos'd his precious blood.

St. Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, (chap. ii. 12th ver.) hits off, to a letter, my lamentable state when Jesus, the compassionate antitype of the "certain Samaritan" spoken of by St. Luke (x. 33), found me, as the sweet evangelical prophet (Isaiah) found to be the deplo-

rable case of Judah, when he penned his first chapter—"my whole head sick, and my whole heart faint, all over wounds and bruises"—and mercifully interposed his strengthening grace, and quickening Spirit to close them and bind them up, without one word of upbraiding. Joseph, one of his Old Testament types, when announced himself to his brethren as their brother, added—*whom ye sold into Egypt* (Gen. xlv. 4). Since that change, as summed up in the thirteenth verse of the chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians above quoted; although a passing cloud occasionally obscures my sight of *Him*, I know he has never lost sight of me; though I am sometimes cast down, yet I have an evidence, at those very times, that I am not cast off; and am persuaded that if he shall at any time see it

necessary to lay *one* hand *upon* me, He will at the same time have *another* *under* me. But to return from this episode.

Such comforts as I have been extolling are very sparingly given, however; not that there is any scarcity of them—no—that fountain which was drawn from the bleeding wounds of our Emmanuel, is full of them—ever full and inexhaustible; but they are only given to those who are humbled by constraining grace to a sense of their want of them, and seek them in the faith that those who “ask shall have, and that those who seek shall find”* if they ask aright; or, as St. James has it, *if they do not ask amiss*; and like Ephraim (*w*) go meaning and pining for consolation till they find it, which the con-

* Matt. vii. 7.

(*w*) Jer. xxxi. 18.

trite heart: "faint yet pursuing" (*ww*), will not long supplicate in vain. But, my friend, it is melancholy to think that those are very few; Christ emphatically calls them a "little flock" (*x*) compared to the vast numbers, who, in their besotted ignorance, set no value on them (as you know was long my case), and laugh at such professions; stigmatizing those who pretend to them, as crazy enthusiasts, or hypocrites—fools, or knaves.

But scoffers there always have been; Moses and the prophets found it so in their time; even Elisha's bald head did not escape their taunts (*y*); and we see, in the record of our blessed Saviour's life

(*ww*) Judges viii. 4; (*x*) Luke xii. 32; (*y*) 2 Kings ii. 23.

on earth, what *He* suffered from them, and with what meekness! What a lesson to us! Even his friends and kinsfolk thought him, "beside himself," and actually went out one day to lay hold of him" (b). Some of the unbelieving part of his audience despised him as the *carpenter* (c), the son of Mary, whom they all knew; others said "he had a devil, and was mad" (d), laughing at the credulity of those who paid any attention to him. Festus alleged the same of St. Paul, when defending himself at that judge's tribunal (e); and at Athens his preaching was ridiculed as *babbling* by the philosophers (f); and God's people of the present day cannot expect to fare better.

(b) Mark iii. 21; (c) Mark vi. 3; (d) John x. 20; (e) Acts xxvi. 24; (f) Acts xvii. 18.

Whatever, in fine, may be thought of spiritual comforts by those who have them not, those who have them find that they are not mere whims and notions, phantoms floating in the head, but realities impressed on the heart; all but *tangible* by a slight effort of the imagination, which the world can neither give nor deprive the possessor of,—a chain of brass suspended on a “nail in a sure place” (*g*), on which the believer, looking through them to their Author, “careful for nothing” himself (Philip. iv. 6), hangs all his hopes. The others have their comforts also, it is true; or rather, they are not troubled with any discomforts, no under current checking *their* tide; and so much the worse for them. “Woe to

(*g*) Isaiah xxii. 23.

them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria (*h*);" "woe to them that are wise in their own eyes" (*i*). They are Laodicians, who "think they have need of nothing, and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (*k*). They are "settled on their lees" (*l*), in a state of fatal delusion, saying "peace, peace, when there is no peace" (*m*); and such comfort as theirs, if we may take his word for it who cannot mistake the matter, is a rope of sand, on which they will in vain lay any stress at the decisive hour which is shutting out this world from their view, on the things of which, and their false estimate of themselves, they had hung all their comforts.

(*h*) Amos vi. 1; (*i*) Isaiah v. 21; (*k*) Rev. iii. 17; (*l*) Zeph. i. 12; (*m*) Jer. vi. 14.

Then, anxious to be longer spared,
 They mourn their fleeting breath ;
 All evils then seem light, compared
 With the approach of death.—COWPER.

Of such a death, or rather the death of such a man, your friend, the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, in his Introductory Essay to Mr. Shower's *Reflections on Time and Eternity*, says—"There is often, in the pencilled descriptions of the moralist, a kind of poetical and highly wrought imagery thrown around the chamber of death—either of the terrors of guilt, or the triumphs of conscious virtue. It is well to know what the plain truth is upon such an occasion. The truth is, that as it was through life, so it is *generally* in dying. He is still engaged with present and sensible things, and there is positively nothing in the mere approach of dissolution that can raise up the ascen-

dancy of faith, or withdraw his thoughts from the things of time; as he has lived so long, he hopes to live a little longer.

“ If, amid the tumult of his earthly fabric giving way, and the last irregular movements of its deranged mechanism fast drawing to their cessation—if, oppressed by pain, parched by thirst, and labouring for breath, he send for the minister to soothe him by his prayers, even his office forms but one of the varieties of the scene. There is no actual going forth of the patient’s mind towards the things which are above. The faith, which he has so long shut out, does not now force its entrance into a bosom habituated to no other influence than what the world, and the things of the world, have so long exercised over him.

“ We may see torpor on such an occa-

sion, and call it serenity; we may witness an uncomplaining silence, and call it resignation; we may never hear one note of alarm drop from the lips of the dying sufferer, and therefore report that he met his end with Christian fortitude.

“But all this may meet upon a death bed, and yet the confidence of looking forward to heaven as a home—a positive rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God—a believing and knowing that, ‘when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens’ (n), may never enter into the bosom.

“There may be the peacefulness of insensibility, even while the life of him who has been a stranger to gospel truth

(n) 2 Cor. v. 1.

and hope is waning to its extinction; but this is the peace of a stupid indifference to the concerns of futurity."*

Your Reverend friend might have added, that when one in the state he describes is asked as to his hope, the ready answer is, *God is merciful*. So he is, or woe betide the best man that ever lived, for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (o). But such an one should be told that God is also a just God, "who will by no means clear the guilty" (p); he will exact justice from all his pennyless debtors to the last jot, before he will shew any mercy; and what has such an one to pay him? The debtor, however, is not left without remedy; the

* What is all this but the resignation of the bedstead on which he reposes!

(o) Heb. x. 31; (p) Exod. xxxiv. 7, and Num. xiv. 18.

contrite lowly insolvent will never petition in vain for his discharge at the throne of grace—the mercy seat—that tribunal established in the *love* of that same God (previously so unrelenting) for adjudicating his case, where the pauper is always provided with counsel who pleads for paupers only, and never lost a cause,—a court where there are no vacations, nor is it difficult of access. See Matt. xi. 28, 29, and John vi. 37, and x. 27, 28, 29. The broken-hearted suppliant will there soon hear the melodious accents of a voice of compassion—

The still voice of Him who expired on the mountain,
 And breathed out for sinners his last dying groan;
 His voice who on Calvary opened the fountain
 Of water to cleanse, and of blood to atone.
 Oh yes, it is known, when kindly and cheering,
 It soothes the loud clamour of justice to rest;
 It is heard,—and the Angel of Mercy appearing,
 Pours the balm of relief o'er the penitent's breast.

Finally, this day is a *memorial* unto me that I have reached the bank of the Jordan, where I stand waiting the signal to cross, now waving at no great distance, if not with any anxious longing for it, yet certainly without any alarm at its rapid march; for, lamentably cold *in degree* as my love is to Him who has so loved me, (and this is now my prevailing grievance,) yet, being his gift, and according to his "measure in bestowing grace" (q), and judging of it by the apostle's test, it must be *perfect in kind*; because, although a larger measure, if he saw fit, and more fervour, would be a great comfort to me, yet, such as it is, it "casteth out *all fear*" (r), excepting the salutary fear of offending its loving and lovely object.

(q) Ephes. iv. 7; (r) 1 John iv. 18.

But, alas! my frigid heart is not so uniformly under the control of that gracious, that generous principle, as I desire it should be. I bless God, however, and with great reason, that it is not without a sensible restraining influence, much to my peace of mind, in my daily walk before both God and man, leavening and chastening the whole tenor of my life and conversation with a curb to which I was formerly a stranger, and imparting to all my affections and desires a bias opposed to their former animal tendency as light is to darkness. But O! how my honest dog upbraids me here!

It is related of Burns, the popular Ayrshire poet, that in conversation with a pious poetical friend (Blacklock), he said, "Man is the god of the dog: He knows no other; he can understand no

other; and see how he worships him!—with what reverence he crouches at his feet—with what love he fawns upon him—with what dependance he looks up to him—and with what alacrity he obeys him! His whole soul is wrapped up in his god; all the powers and faculties of his nature are devoted to his service, and these powers and faculties are ennobled by the intercourse.* If any thing could be added with effect to this eulogy of Mr. Burns on the poor dog, I would say, how grateful he is for every act of kindness; how affectionately responding to his master's caresses; how obsequious under his displeasure; how submissive under his chastisements; *sitting at his feet*, hanging upon the music of his voice,

* The Rev. Dr. Henry Duncan's *Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons*.

while all around him are variously engaged; forsaking his companions, in their most playful mood, to follow his master whithersoever he goes; how delighted on being re-admitted to familiarity with him after any occasional estrangement; with what joy he runs to meet him after a temporary separation!*. How different was fallen Adam! He *hid himself* (s) when he heard *his* master's voice in the garden, and has bequeathed his shyness to all his posterity while in an unrenewed state.

Triflers, blind to this beautiful moral, will see nothing in the dog's habits worth their attention. Such is the dog's nature, they will say. *It is* the dog's nature; and as he is, prescriptively of all

* See Appendix C.

(s) Gen. iii. 10.

his tribe, the companion of man, it seems as if it were implanted in him by their common Maker, that man may always have before his eyes an illustration of what *his* habitual frame ought to be towards *his* Master. Love, in fine, is the dog's ruling passion—the grand incentive to *his* duty, which thus becomes the business of his life. O, how the example of the poor, the despised, the unconscious brute, whose “hope, like that of the hypocrite, perisheth” (t), libels the bulk of professing Christians, who have “hope in their death” (u), if not forfeited by their pride and ingratitude, which bar all access to God in hope; and, if repentance does not intervene, doom the miserable outcast to final reprobation.

(t) Job viii. 13 ; (u) Prov. xiv. 32.

But, to return to my station on the bank of the Jordan. Here I patiently linger for the plunge, without any of that shivering which a naked soul would feel in such circumstances; for, being "clothed with a change of raiment" (w), shrouded in the mantle of faith, I am proof against all apprehension. Instead of this confidence, how forlorn should I be at this juncture but for the comforts of the "cluster from Eshool" (x), those first fruits and earnest of the promised land which now sustain me; and the hope, never long nor seriously overcast, that on the approaching expiration of my lease in this wilderness, this strange land, where my harp is often on the willow when I most want to sing, I shall enter on a free-

(w) Zech. iii. 4; (x) Numbers xiii. 23.

hold in one of the "many mansions" in the New Canaan; where this wavering life of sinning and praying, and praying and sinning, shall end in a permanent state of purity and praise; where this wintry season of my pilgrimage shall be succeeded by perennial spring; where I shall have the joyful assurance that all my doubts in this state had been groundless; where even faith itself shall be no longer called for: and my Joshua is gone before me, *professedly* to "prepare a place for me" (*y*), leaving me a precious promise that He will "come again and receive me to himself, that where he is, there I may be also" (*yy*). Indeed,

His love in time past forbids me to think,
He'll leave me at last in faintness to sink;

(*y*) John xiv. 2, 3; (*yy*) John xiv. 2, 3.

Each sweet Ebenezer, I have in review,
 Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through.
 Determined to save, he watched o'er my path,
 When Satan's blind slave, I sported with death;
 And can he have taught me to trust in his name,
 Or thus far have brought me to put me to shame?

Here I set up another Ebenezer, and, as David did, "sit before the Lord," exclaiming with that man of God (2 Sam. vii. 18), "*Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?*" Meditating, as is much my custom, on the Lord's unsearchable ways with me, both in providence and grace, and panting for the liberty of pouring out my whole soul in terms befitting my deep sense of gratitude for innumerable mercies in both kingdoms, I find the most satisfactory and comprehensive utterance in the above rapturous exclamation of David, on Nathan's divulging the

Lord's mind to him; and I often adopt it (as I do at this instant) in similar exstacy. It is a huge volume compressed into a few words; an anodyne, mitigating the anguish of a soul oppressed and humbled to the dust, overwhelmed with a sense of its pollution before Him in whose sight the "stars are not pure" (Job xxv. 5), and struggling for access to the throne, with thanks and praises for its experience of favour and acceptance there, through the good offices of the Mediator of the New Covenant, notwithstanding the interminable black catalogue of its demerits. Oh! how the devout leprous soul in this humble frame abhors himself with holy Job (xlii. 6) "in dust and ashes;" glowing in the thoughts of the future, and recoiling on the past with mingled emotions of loathing, hatred and disgust!

In the meantime; I go to that throne boldly with all my wants both for time and eternity, unbesoming myself there as to a confidential friend; being invited to cast,—not any care of particular importance, or a case of unusual difficulty, but—*all* my cares upon Him who careth for me (*z*); and, contemplating the character of Him I have to do with, who condescends to “number the hairs of my head” (*a*), and without whose knowledge “a sparrow does not fall to the ground” (*b*), I well know that, while He; ^{as} as keeper of his Israel never “slumbering nor sleeping” (*c*), watches my eternal interest with unremitting care, the most trifling of my temporal concerns is not

(*z*) 1 Peter, v. 7; (*a*) Matt. x. 30; (*b*) Matt. x. 29;
 (*c*) Psalm cxxi. 4.

indifferent to Him; and therefore humbly submitting all to his sovereign pleasure, as to what He sees fit to give or what to deny, and armed with the apostolic command—"in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make my requests known unto God" (d); and the prophet's injunction to "give Him no rest" (e), I am under no apprehension of being intrusive.

Mr. Guthrie, an eminent divine of the Church of Scotland, in the seventeenth century, who will not be suspected of a want of due reverence on such occasions, by those who have the pleasure of knowing his admirable work called the "*Christian's Great Interest*," in his chapter on *communion with God*, says:—

(d) Philip. iv. 6; (e) Isa. lxii. 7.

"The believer may, in a humble way, be homely and familiar with God in Christ; he may come with boldness to the throne of grace, and not use a number of compliments in his addresses to God: for he is no more a stranger to God; so that he needs not speak unto God as one who has acquaintance to make every hour, as many professors do, which makes a great inconsistency in their religion."*

Indeed he frequently vouchsafes to give me proofs that I am not tiresome to

* Mr. Guthrie's biographer, in a short but interesting memoir of his life, prefixed to the Glasgow edition of Mr. Guthrie's work, relates that Dr. Owen, in a conversation with a Scotch Minister who chanced to visit him, said:—"You have truly great spirits in Scotland; and for a divine, (taking out of his pocket a little gilt copy of Mr. Guthrie's treatise,) *that author* I take to be one of the greatest divines that ever wrote. It is my *vade mecum*, and I carry it and the Sedan

him; one of which I am *just now* called upon to acknowledge in delightful experience. This communion with God is, to the believer, "a feast of fat things, full of marrow" (*f*), and never cloying, which thousands who are under daily obligations to the same benevolent friend, never taste. He gives, it is true, "liberally and without upbraiding, to all that ask him in faith, nothing wavering" (*g*); but the blind multitude, regardless alike of both him and his favours, see only the consequences of their own foresight or neglect, or what they call chance (where the Christian sees providential results

New Testament still about me. I have wrote several folios, but there is more divinity in it than them all." The works of that celebrated divine are, in these days, comprised in twenty-one octavo volumes.

(*f*) Isaiah xxv. 6 : (*g*) James i. 5, 6.

wisely ordered or permitted), and are consequently strangers to that exquisite sense of ethereal gratitude, which swells the bosom, and thrills through the innermost recesses of the souls of those, to whom, in his good pleasure, he thus manifests himself. Oh, how the child of God, seeing, in the common mercies of every-day life, the same love that transfixed his Saviour to the cross, feels himself constrained to habitual adoration of what is at present incomprehensible, and to keep all his faculties concentrated, and as it were absorbed, in the contemplation. Mr. Addison, in his tender metrical effusion on that subject, says

Precious and untimbered gifts,
 My daily thanks employ;
 Nor is the least a grateful heart,
 That tastes these gifts with joy.

No indeed, it is far from the least. It is no less than one of the great safeguards of our peace; a relief always at hand from the stings of remorse, which must, sooner or later, sap the repose of the thoughtless ingrate, if he does not die as he had lived, unheedful of a bright summer of unmerited mercies, closing perhaps in a dreary winter of trials and temptations, without a glimpse of the hand, or the will of God in the one or the other; and "a wounded spirit who can hear" (b).

Oh God! but invigorate me with the resignation of holy Eli (i), and *come weal, come woe*, in all that concerns me in this life, whether immediately from thy hand, or by thy chosen instruments.

(b) Prov. xviii. 14; (i) 1 Sam. iii. 1 to 18.

In the meantime whilst, after a long course of worldly prosperity, thou hast given over some of my friends to the "bread of adversity, and the water of affliction" (*k*) in their old age, thou hast been pleased to reverse that order in thy dealings with me; having, after a youth and middle age of crosses in life, up to a late period, compassed about my grey hairs with health of body—a contented mind—a thankful heart, and a profusion of "blessings in my basket, and in my store" (*l*), of which thou knowest I am far from undervaluing the least; but I desire to magnify thy holy name, and to rejoice especially in thy gift of imperturbable serenity in my present state of suspense, not between hope and fear,

(*k*) Isaiah xxx. 20: (*l*) Deuteronomy xxviii. 5.

for that is all settled, but as to the day, and the eventful hour, when "my time shall be no longer" (*m*); when the bright prospects thou hast unfolded to me shall be realized; when faith shall be swallowed up in the sight of him in whom I have believed; when, "clothed in a robe washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. vii. 14), I shall fall into the ranks of the "spirits of just men made perfect" (*n*); where my faltering tongue, no longer under the restraint of which it now complains, instead of the scanty rills that distil from it occasionally at present, shall be at full liberty, in harmony with the angelic choir, to pour out endless libations of praise to "Him that sitteth upon the throne" (*o*):—

(*m*) Rev. x. 6; (*n*) Heb. xii. 23; (*o*) Rev. v. 13.

When the naked soul, surrounded
 With innum'rous hosts of light,
 Shall triumph in the view unbounded,
 And adore the Infinite !
 In that sudden strange transition,
 By what new and finer sense
 Shall it grasp the mighty vision,
 And receive its influence ?
 Will it then no fond emotion,
 Nought of earthly love retain ?
 Or absorb'd in pure devotion,
 Will no mortal trace remain ?
 Thought, repress thy weak endeavour,
 Here must reason prostrate fall,
 Before the ineffable *For Ever*,
 And the Eternal *All in All* !

I have not, indeed, like the apostle,
 been caught up into the third heaven, and
 there heard things which he says, "it is
 not lawful for a man to utter (*p*)," but I
 am sometimes wafted to its suburbs, and
 share a delight, something of a seraphic
 nature, in the obscure glimpse of what
 passes there, unfolded to me by faith and

hope,—not indeed unlawful to describe, but incommunicable by any words within the compass of my choice. The believer may be said to leap for joy at these times, “as being for a season carried above all sense and thought of sin, self, temptation, or trouble.”* He is like Elihu, “full of matter”; like Elihu’s *belly*, his heart “is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles” (Job xxxii. 18, 19). Mr. Scougal,† a worthy Scotch divine of the seventeenth century, well observes, that “when we have said all that we can, the secret mysteries of a new nature and divine life can never be sufficiently expressed; language and words cannot reach them, nor can they be truly understood but by those souls

* OWEN, on the 130th Psalm.

† In his *Life of God in the Soul of Man*.

that are enkindled within, and awakened to a sense and relish of spiritual things."

If I be jeered on all this by some ignorant or profane witling among my worldly associates, from whom an entire seclusion, however desirable, is impracticable in this state, and asked how these unutterable things *can* be?—or how *I* came by the knowledge of them? I would tell him that "it seemeth good in the sight of our Father, the Lord of heaven and earth, to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and to reveal them unto babes" (Matt. xi. 25, 26); or I would answer, in the words of the blessed Jesus to Nicomedes, who propounded a similar question, but in a far different frame of mind, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it

cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every man that is born of the Spirit (*q*); or I would say, it is "the hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name written in it, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Rev. ii. 17.

Such a man feels the spiritual machinery at work in him, as sensibly as he does the wind when it blows. He is as conscious that the work is going on, as he is of his existence; he therefore knows that these things *are*. He also knows by what agency; but how the agent works, he can no more demonstrate, than whence the wind comes, and whither it goes. This was a mystery to St. Paul (1 Tim. iii. 16); and Mr. Marshall,* a divine of the seventeenth century, eminent alike

(*q*) John iii. 1 to 9.

* In his *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*.

for his piety and learning, classes the process by which "Christ and the believer become one in spirit, with the mystery of the union of the Trinity of Persons in one Godhead, and that of the divine and human nature in the person of Jesus Christ—God and man."

If the witty sceptic, or thoughtless trifler, be not yet satisfied, knowing that a sound lawyer may be a bad advocate, and that with a zeal outrunning my judgment, I might mar a glorious cause by feeble and ill-chosen arguments, I would wind up the controversy by gravely telling him, *I know that my Redeemer liveth* (Job xix. 25); that *He ever liveth to make intercession for me* (Heb. vii. 25); that *I know whom I have believed* (2 Tim. i. 12); that *the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost* (Luke

xix. 10); that *I was lost, and am found* (Luke xv. 24); that *whereas I was blind, now I see* (John ix. 25); that this is enough for me at present, and that I wait until the open portals of future and final revelation shall *show me the things which must be hereafter*. Rev. iv. 1.

To conclude :—I know that the work is going on, and having an assurance that “He who hath begun it will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (r), and consequently that

Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above,
Shall make him his purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from his love.

No,—

My name from the palms of his hands
Eternity will not erase ;
Impress'd on his heart it remains,
In marks of indelible grace.

Yes,—I to the end shall endure,
 As sure as the earnest is given ;
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven.

When the eunuch's understanding was opened by Philip to apprehend what he was reading, and water being at hand, he asked the apostle "what hindered his being baptized" (*s*); so after the great things the Lord has done for me (*t*), and looking forward to the mighty things reserved for me, what hinders my exclaiming with David, "*Lord, what wait I for (u) ?*" or with holy Simeon, "*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation*" (*w*).

Simeon had then the infant Redeemer in his arms, but that circumstance gave

(*s*) Acts viii. 36; (*t*) Mark v. 19; (*u*) Psalm xxxix. 7; (*w*) Luke ii. 26 to 30.

him no advantage over us of this day. It had indeed been revealed to him that he should not "see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ,"—but it was only by faith that he could see the promised salvation in a helpless baby; and if, as is nothing uncommon, his faith had been slumbering before, it was then called into action. Let your faith and mine, my friend, be not only called into, but kept in action, by the revelation of that Redeemer, and the fulfillment of all the prophecies respecting his advent, which we have in the gospel; and so shall we enjoy a triumphant anticipation of his second coming at that awful day "when all who are in their graves shall come forth to judgment"^(x), when the

(x) John v. 28, 29.

powers of the heavens shall be shaken (y), and all creation dissolved (z): while the impenitent, the careless, and incorrigible sinner, if he ever thinks of it at all, is left to a gloomy foreboding of all its terrors: that day of final retribution, when

The dead in Christ are first to rise,
 And greet the archangel's warning,
 To meet the Saviour in the skies,
 On that auspicious morning :
 No gloomy fears their souls dismay,
 His presence sheds eternal day,
 On those prepared to meet him.

When,

Far o'er space to distant spheres,
 The lightnings are prevailing ;
 Th' ungodly rise, and all their tears
 And sighs are unavailing ;
 The day of grace is past and gone,
 They quake before the judgment throne,
 All unprepar'd to meet him.

(y) Matt. xxiv. 29 ; (z) 2 Peter iii. 10 to 12.

Mr. Baxter, in his *Call to the Unconverted*, notices the apathy with which such go on their way, regardless of the day of grace, which is hourly closing in upon them, thinking they may venture to live as most do; “and, when one is cut off and cast into hell, and another swept away from among them to the same condemnation, it doth not much daunt them, because they see not whither they are gone.” He here introduces the following little story, related to him by a friend who saw the occurrence upon a bridge called Acham Bridge, which crosses the Severn.

“A man was driving a flock of fat lambs; and, something meeting them and hindering their passage, one of the lambs leaped upon the wall of the bridge, and his feet slipping from under him, he

fell into the stream ;—the rest seeing him, did, one after another, leap over the bridge into the stream, where all, or nearly all, were drowned. Those that were behind did little know what was become of those that went before, but thought they might venture to follow their companions.”

The above seems to be a good illustration of the ignorance and fatal recklessness, with which most people are witnessing the funeral processions of high and low—rich and poor—old and young of both sexes, which they are now daily encountering* ; all these thoughtless spectators going the same way sooner or later,—some perhaps before another

* During the prevalence of the epidemic called *Influenza*.

day passed over their heads, without knowing or caring whither they were going; no more moved by such sights, than if they were so many gardeners' carts going to market; beginning and ending all they have to say on such occasions, with—"one cannot turn a corner without meeting a funeral": where so little is *said*, and with such levity, there seems no risk of a breach of charity in concluding that, in many cases, very little is *thought*. Perhaps, like Felix, they are deferring repentance till they *have a convenient season*. We are not told that Felix ever found that convenient season; and if it shall turn out so with them,

When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelm'd with guilt and fear,
They see their Maker face to face,
O! how shall they appear?

When Christ, their judge, shall stand disclos'd
In majesty severe ;
And sit in judgment on their souls,
O! how shall they appear?

So much for man in his unrenewed state. I now turn to that same man in a regenerated state, under sufferings from which he was formerly exempted. While he was the willing slave of sin, without any sense of his bondage, and consequently no thought of repenting, he was no trouble to Satan. He was as unfit for heaven as Satan could wish, and his work was done; but Satan takes the alarm and bestirs himself if he finds he is threatened with the loss of so loyal a subject,—and leaves nothing undone to prevent his enlisting under the banner of the cross; and, if enlisted and past retracting, to render the service as burthensome to him as possible.

The late Mr. William Mason, a pious layman of Rotherhithe, in his very interesting work called the "Believer's pocket companion, or the one thing needful to make poor sinners rich, and miserable sinners happy"—avails himself of the following anecdote, in commenting on that branch of his subject:—"I have read" (Mr. Mason says) "of one who undertook to make a fat sheep lean, and yet allow it daily a sufficient quantity of good and wholesome provender, soft and easy lodging, and security from all danger that nothing would hurt it. This he effected by putting the sheep into an iron grate, and placing a ravenous wolf hard by in another, who was always howling, scenting, and scratching to come at the poor sheep. This sad sound, and worse sight, so terrified the sheep, that it had

little desire to sleep, and less to eat, so that his flesh soon abated, and he became very lean."

"Just so" (Mr. Mason adds), "Satan, that wolf of prey, serves many of Christ's sheep. He accuses, teases, and terrifies their consciences; when they cry for peace, he says to the poor sinner, as Jehu said to the messengers of Jehoram—'what hast thou to do with peace (a)? Turn thee behind me.' Though Christ is set before the sinner as his food, his clothing, and for the peace of his conscience—yet, what with listening to Satan's lies, and the prevailings of unbelief, the soul neglects to feed on Christ, and to put (b) him on for peace of conscience:—hence he grows very lean, and lives

(a) 2 Kings ix. 19; (b) Rom. xiii. 14; Gal. iii. 27.

very uncomfortable. But what dishonour is this to the glorious work of Christ?— and what distress of conscience do many of his beloved sheep (thus unnecessarily) labour under?” The word *unnecessarily* here is an interpolation of mine; because whatever these tempest tossed souls may suffer at times under a disconsolate view of their spiritual condition, oppressed as the devout penman of the lxxvii. Psalm seems to have been (7 8 9 verses)*, yet, having the blessed assurance that Jesus “having loved his own which

* “Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. (Verse 10.) And I said, this “is my infirmity.” The psalmist appears, by what follows, to have arrived at this conclusion by calling to mind God’s gracious ways with his people on former occasions.

were in the world, he loved them to the end" (c), their misgiving is merely the vacillation of their infirmity—the swerving of an unsteady course, while faith wavers at the helm, as the psalmist exultingly discovers in the 10th verse, to have been the case with him in a similar frame ; but

How hard and rugged is the way,
To some poor pilgrims' feet,
In all they do, or think, or say,
They opposition meet.

Others again more smoothly go,
Secur'd from hurts and harms ;
Their Saviour leads them gently through,
Or bears them in his arms.

Faith and repentance all must find,
But yet we daily see,
They differ in their time and kind,
Duration and degree.

Crosses and changes are their lot,
Long as they sojourn here ;
But since their Saviour changes not,
What have the saints to fear ?

(c) John xiii. 1.

I now bid you adieu, my dear friend. I have been more particular than usual with this commemoration of my eighty-second birthday, being in the expectation that another such occasion will not occur. In that indeed I may be disappointed by Him who "numbereth my steps" (*d*). They cannot be many more, however, without a change in his decree, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning" (*e*). But oh! be they many, or be they few,—be thy gracious purpose in that respect what it may—

Father ! whate'er of earthly bliss,
 Thy sovereign will denies ;
 Accepted at the throne of grace,
 Let this petition rise.

May the sweet hope that thou art mine,
 My life and death attend ;
 Thy presence through my journey shine,
 And crown that journey's end.

(*d*) Job xiv. 16 ; (*e*) James i. 17.

In the hope that such may be the end of both your journey and mine—accomplishing our days in peace—“bound up in the bundle (*f*) of life,” and thus finally, with all the elect, meet in the fellowship of everlasting joy, I remain with an indelible sense of all your kindness, during a course of seven and forty years,

My dear Friend,

Yours affectionately,

A. G.

The Letter to my Friend is retained in the foregoing, nearly word for word; but, as reflections and meditations occurred, has been enlarged on its destination for the public eye. I have also taken that opportunity of adding the Appendices A, B, C, D, and E.

May 15th, 1837.



APPENDIX A.



The following colloquy of the Rev. Oliver Haywood, A. M., with his soul, harmonizes most sympathetically with my present state.

“How is it with thee now, O my soul” (as Mr. H. expostulates), “when the casket that keeps this precious jewel is so cracked? What sayest thou, trembling inhabitant, when thy house begins to fail, and the foundations of this tabernacle of clay are felt to totter?—art thou troubled? Thy head was sick through a blind and perverse under-

standing, and thy heart faint through weakness in grace, and strength of sinning:—now thy head doth ache with pain, and thy heart is sick with a grievous distemper. God will retaliate with a judgment suitable to the offence. Acknowledge the justice of awarding suffering according to thy sin; and admire God's goodness that it is not more severe; praise him for his goodness and pity—improve this blessed opportunity to get thy heart nearer heaven, and farther from the world: long for thy house from above, and wait for it till it come, and watch over thy heart. The alarm is sounded—the signal is given—therefore lay down thy weapons—surrender thyself as the Lord's prisoner; he will not harm, but deliver thee. Is not a happy deliverance, better than a cruel

slavery? Fear not God's call:—it is but to bring thee to himself,—and canst thou be in an evil place when in God's presence, who is the perfection of happiness? But stay—he comes not yet—thy time is not yet expired—thy sun is not yet set—knowest thou that? Granted; but will it therefore follow that—it will not come at all? Will it be any disadvantage to thee to be ready long before death come? surely not, but the contrary. What comfort will rebound to thee thereby, and what glory to God?"

Mr. Haywood was minister of Coley Chapel, in Lincolnshire, in the seventeenth century, and died on the 4th of May, 1702. He was one of the many who suffered much by persecution for nonconformity in Charles the Second's time. There is only this difference be-

tween his case, and mine—that he was called to the contemplation of death, more specially than usual, by severe bodily affliction on his road to the *city of refuge*; and I, by my advanced age and infirmity. He is safe at the end of his journey; and, although I have not had so clear a demonstration of the Lord's purpose in my case, as the lying prophet had (Jeremiah xxviii. 16); yet, feeling sensibly that life, at best but a vapour (James iv. 14), is *now* with me *literally* a lingering death, I am an importunate suitor at the throne for help to hold myself in readiness to follow him; and, with Gethsemane for my finger post, keeping Calvary in view, I am happily preserved from any disquieting fear of missing my way. In the meantime,

'Tis sweet to rest in lively hope,
That, when my change shall come,
Angels will hover round my bed,
And waft my spirit home.

Soon too my slumbering dust shall hear
The trumpet's quick'ning sound ;
And, by my Saviour's pow'r rebuilt,
At his right hand be found.

I have said, and truly said, that my life is now a lingering death—it is so—but how am I lingering?—in perfect health of body and peace of mind ; surrounded by comforts : in a humble trust of being in favour with God, and certainly at peace with my fellow men. My Redeemer's death was also a lingering death—but how different!—he lingered for hours on the accursed tree, in an agony of body such as can enter into the heart or mind of no man to conceive—mercy to others all the while streaming

from every pore of his lacerated frame—and we can less, if possible, conceive anything of his mental anguish, and convulsion of soul, when, with the bitter cup at his lips, the fainting dying Lamb raised his voice in that doleful remonstrance with his Father, recorded by the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, *my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!*—and all to save the wretched worm man—*me* who writes, and *thou* who readest—from the pangs of torments, aggravated by unavailing remorse, which after millions of years shall have elapsed, will be as far from their end as when they began.

The man whose mind is rightly constituted, is often oppressed by a sense of obligation to his fellow man; he may, however, in some cases, find relief in

making a partial³ return. But the once enslaved sinner, ransomed from such a destiny, at such a price, in vain ransacks every corner of his heart, for any return *he* can make, be it only a sense of gratitude, *in his own power*. In this strait he has nothing left for it, but to go to his knees in some such strains as those here subjoined, adapted by that extraordinary man, Mr. John Newton, * for celebrating his own blood-bought pardon. They appear to breathe a spirit of contrition, humiliation, and thanksgiving, while absorbed in meditation on redeeming love, well befitting such occasions—he so paraphrases Ephesians ii. 12, 13. Had I been sitting to the apostle

* Late Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard-street, and author of the *Cardiphonia*, *Omicron*, &c.

for my spiritual portrait, as it *was* and now *is*, when he had his pen in his hand, he could not have hit it off more faithfully than I find it there; and so Mr. Newton, no doubt, found it when disburdening his heart as follows:—

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stop'd my wild career.

I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt, and own'd the guilt,
And plung'd me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And help'd to nail him there.

Alas ! I knew not what I did ;
 But now my tears are vain ;
 Where shall my trembling soul be hid ?
 For I the Lord have slain.

A second look he gave, which said,
 " I freely all forgive ;
 " This blood is for thy ransom paid ;
 " I die that thou may'st live."*

Thus while his death my sin displays
 In all its blackest hue,
 (Such is the mystery of grace)
 It seals my pardon too.

With pleasing grief, and mournful joy,
 My spirit now is filled,
 That I should such a life destroy,
 Yet live by him I kill'd.

* Oh, how that scene, and all the circumstances of the last four-and-twenty hours of my Saviour's life on earth, flit in rapid succession before my mind's eye sometimes, when I meet a Jew old clothesman in the street. I see passing by me a descendant of that once highly favoured mighty race, who formerly, under the banner of their Almighty Leader, vanquished kingdom after kingdom : but are now themselves blotted out from among the nations !

Thus one series of the prophecies respecting their

temporal concerns is literally fulfilled. They have gracious promises, however, to look to, which will, in God's good time, be realized with equal certainty. Lord, hasten "those days and that time," in which thou art pleased to say, by thy servant Jeremiah (l. 20), "the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found";—"when the days of their mourning shall be ended" (Isaiah lx. 20). Amen !

APPENDIX B.



The following will be found to have reference to the subject of page 30. It was addressed, in illustration of a particular conversation I had with him some time ago, to a friend who is familiar with its technical style, as some other readers may perhaps be:—

To _____

I spoke from experience in my letter to _____, when I called this life a state of warfare; for not a day, and some days not an hour passes

over my head, that I have not some assault to repel ; the old man still contending for the mastery, and the new one sometimes put to it to maintain his ascendancy. There was a time when, in the school of nature, I should not have understood this language ;—I should have treated it, wherever I heard it, as the chimera of a foolish or disordered brain ;—but I have been at a school since, where I have been well exercised in it ; where all its obscurity has been removed, and its import experimentally opened to me by “ a new and living way”, that I cannot mistake.

I have taken a fancy to compare the zig-zag path of the heaven-bound Christian, to the track of a ship in the channel bound to Portsmouth, with the wind variable.

The ship has sometimes a fair wind; and sometimes all goes smoothly with the Christian.

She has at other times to beat against a foul one; and the Christian has often to beat against his corrupt nature, assailed by snares and temptations without, while a traitor in his bosom is always ready to give them admittance.

The ship, sometimes by the veering of the wind, loses on one tack, nearly all she had gained on the other;—so the Christian, in an hour of languishing faith, and faintness of heart (Leviticus xxvi. 36), nearly loses all he had gained, perhaps the hour before, in lively hope. One day he says of the Lord, “he is my refuge and my fortress”; and the next perhaps “he says in his haste, he is cut off” (Psalm xci. 2, and xxxi. 22).

The ship however continues to beat up, against wind and tide; and; by perseverance gains ground;—so the experienced Christian, knowing that all the fluctuations in his frames are but temporary, and consequently no criterion whereby to judge of his real state; looks over them, or through them, for renewed refreshing visits from his Friend, in whom there is “no variableness, nor shadow of turning” (James i. 17); “the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8); and thus he also gains ground against all obstacles, though perhaps sometimes slowly.

The ship, whatever obstructions a contrary wind may offer, never throws all aback; satisfied with the progress she has made, until she reaches her destined port; but some Christians, reposing on

selfish mistaken views of their case, and thinking their mountain stands too strong to be moved (Psalm xxx. 6, 7), betake themselves to rest under a gourd of their own, little suspecting a withering worm in preparation for smiting it (Jonah iv. 4 to 8).

The ship is never without a light in the binnacle,—the sun by day, and a candle or a lamp by night;—here she has an envied advantage in her course over that of the stoutest Christian that lives, whose compass is often darkened;—but he knows where light is to be had, and prays for help to follow the prophet's advice in the following well-adapted text:—"who is among you that feareth the Lord—that obeyeth the voice of his servant—that *walketh in darkness and hath no light?* let him trust in the name

of the Lord, and 'stay upon his God' (Isaiah l. 10).

At length the ship rounds St. Helen's point, and the same wind which had been against her, becomes a fair wind;—she squares her yards—runs up to her anchoring ground at Spithead, in triumph, and all on board are welcomed by their friends;—so the Christian, whose faith had surmounted all its trials, finally enters upon his rest; welcomed by Him "whom having not seen he had loved" (1 Peter i. 5); to the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for the "blessed of his Father from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34).

In the meantime, when contemplating that transcendently interesting prospect of *the end of my faith* (1 Peter i. 9), I find such compositions as the subjoined

tender effusion of the amiable poet
Cowper, paraphrasing Philipplans i. 23,
 pleasing helps to meditation; and, in the
 hope that you may also find it acceptable
 at such times, remain;

My dear Friend,

Yours now, and to the end of

My small remnant of time,

A. G.

To Jesus, the crown of my hope,
 My soul is in haste to be gone :
 O bear me, ye Cherubim, up,
 And waft me away to his throne.

My Saviour ! whom absent I love,
 Whom not having seen I adore ;
 Whose name is exalted above
 All glory, dominion, and pow'r.

Dissolve, thou, these bonds that detain
 My soul from its portion in thee :
 Oh ! shake off this adamant chain,
 And make me eternally free.

When that happy era begins,
 When array'd in thy glories I shine,
 Nor grieve any more, by my sins,
 The bosom on which I recline,

O then shall the veil be remov'd,
 And round thee thy brightness be pour'd ;
 I shall meet him whom absent I lov'd,
 I shall see whom unseen I ador'd :

And then, never more shall the fears,
 The trials, temptations, and woes,
 Which darken this valley of tears,
 Intrude on my blissful repose.

Or if yet remember'd above,
 Remembrance no sadness will raise ;
 They will be but new signs of thy love ;
 New themes for my wonder and praise.

Thus the strokes which, from sin and from pain,
 Shall set me eternally free,
 Will but strengthen and rivet the chain
 Which binds me, my Saviour, to thee.

APPENDIX C.

See page 94, et seq.



A slip of a column of a country newspaper, with the following story, was lately put into my hand:—

“CANINE FIDELITY.—A Scotch nobleman had a favourite mastiff, in whom such was his fondness, he had pardoned many felonies, chiefly of sheep murder. His patience being worn out, he at length ordered the dog to be hanged, and addressed him to that effect in a pathetic speech. The dog, as if he understood

him, instantly disappeared, and was no more heard of in Scotland. Two years afterwards, the Duke (for he was no less), travelling in Flanders, was benighted in one of the forests there; and the next stage being a fortified town, he was told at the lone inn where he had stopped, that being too late, he would not be admitted, and he agreed to a proposal made to him to remain where he was all night, the accommodation being tolerably good. At supper, to his and to his servant's astonishment, he saw enter the room his old and favourite mastiff, whom he had been forced to condemn to death. Great were the rejoicings on both sides; and it was observed that the dog would never quit him, but resisted all attempts of the people of the house to drive or coax him from the chamber. As night advanced,

and the Duke prepared to go to bed, the dog became agitated, he howled and scratched the floor, then laid his paws on the Duke's shoulders, and looked wistfully in his face, but was comparatively quiet till the servant departed to a chamber allotted to him out of the house. The Duke then beginning to undress, the dog became violent in opposing the stripping, laid hold of the coat with his teeth, and struggled hard, and even fiercely, to prevent him from proceeding. The Duke was struck with this strange violence, and finding that whenever he desisted, the dog was quiet, reposed himself in an armed chair, instead of going to bed. Here he dozed for a couple of hours, when he was waked by the bark of his friend, and on opening his eyes was astonished at seeing the bed descending

through the floor. He immediately gave an alarm; the descent of the bed stopped; and the Duke grasped his pistols, waiting the event. Some minutes afterwards he thought the door, which was bolted in the inside, was attempted; at least he heard footsteps, upon which he fired through the planks, and hallooed loudly for his servant from the window. It was Midsummer, and soon became light, and being joined by his man, they sallied over the house, accompanied everywhere by the dog, who expressed his pleasure, it was said, by every possible canine gesticulation. They searched the house, and every adjoining shed, but found the whole abandoned; nor (that I ever heard) was there any further result. But the dog was of course taken home, pardoned all his felonies, and lived happily with his

master ever afterwards."—*Mr. Ward's Human Life.*

Not being in possession of Mr. Ward's work, I borrowed it for the purpose of reference, and find the anecdote occurs in the first volume, in a chapter on *Providence*, dedicated, at page 251, to the *Hon. and Rev. Augustus Phipps*, Rector of Halesworth, in Suffolk, in the third section of which it is introduced, in a dialogue on *Particular Providence*.

This is not a place, were I qualified, for criticising the arguments of Mr. Ward's speakers, on the questions of Providence, Predestination, Free Will, &c. The merely inquisitive reader may consult them for his amusement; and the serious reader may, perhaps, not think an hour misemployed in reading, with some attention, that discussion on the

mysterious ways of Him who "layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters" (Psalm civ. 3).

I may, however, observe on the above story, that we know dogs will shrink from, and endeavour to avoid, a danger they see; but to admit the idea of the dog alluded to disappearing from alarm at a danger only threatened, may seem a tax on our credulity; and yet, when it is considered that a dog of his description was not likely to suffer himself to be carried off by violence, and as little likely to wander or be *allured* from a master he loved, it appears somewhat difficult to reject it.*

* I remember reading some years ago (I forget where or when) of a Newfoundland dog, who had grown old in the service of his master on board of a ship, disappearing on being reminded of the helpless state to

If it be admitted, the dog's first impulse, in what may be called his state of nature, would probably have been to tear his master to pieces for his own preservation. But no! he is regenerated; love has worked in him a change, differing indeed in kind, but not less in degree, than that which grace works in man; he is quite a different—a new dog, and, revolting from the thoughts of offering any violence to his beloved master, he betakes himself to flight.

which he was reduced by old age, and threatened to be shot. To the surprise of his master, he was brought on board his own ship the next day, from another that lay near, to which it appeared he had swam when he was missed, and being known, was restored to his master accordingly. These two anecdotes seem to furnish work for the pioneer in mystery; breaking ground with the admission of the two dogs disappearing, as above narrated, which he can have no reason to doubt, and delving until he come to their reasons for so disappearing.

Giving him this credit for sensibility, the state of the poor exile's mind on forsaking his much-loved home, may be conceived from his conduct on his unexpected providential re-union with his master in a den of assassins, two years afterwards; from which it appears that unquenchable love, however assailed it might have been by time, or otherwise, had never abdicated its throne in his heart. Here a probability is suggested, that he to whom the forlorn creature had attached himself on his flight from his first master, had disappeared mysteriously (in the same haunt of ruffians) on the bed where his old master was preparing to repose, and only preserved from destruction by the faithful animal's experience and importunity; and be it observed, that he could not have acquired

that experience had he remained at home, and accompanied his master in his travels.

We have in this story a fine parable of our divine Master's never-ending love to his own whom he had once loved ; but man searches his heart in vain for any counterpart of such an undeviating, ardent, and unsophisticated a return as the dog evinces to *his* master. The subjoined expostulation forms a test that may, in a good measure, help the hesitating anxious Christian in scanning that question with his conscience. I often resort to it; and, at those comfortable times and seasons when my languishing graces "revive as the corn and grow as the vine" (Hosea xiv. 7), I am really at a loss for a satisfactory reason, why I should not be as confident as the apostle

**Peter was, when questioned on that head
by the blessed Jesus in person, at His
second appearance to his disciples after
his resurrection (John xxi. 15, 16, 17).**

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name!

Could my heart so hard remain,
Pray'r a task and burthen prove;
Ev'ry trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mix'd with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall ;
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all ?

Could I joy his saints to meet;
Choose the ways I once abhor'd,
Find at times the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord ?

Lord, decide the doubtful case ;
Thou who art thy people's sun ;
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray :
If I have not lov'd before,
Help me to begin to-day.

I am loth to dismiss the dog story without adverting to the hand of Providence so evident in it—to that eye which compasses, at a glance, every thing past, present, and to come ! but in that instance, and in the bias, secret but irresistible, which an unseen, unerring

Power imparts to our paths all through life, blind, perverse, thoughtless people see nothing but that non-descript thing they call *chance*—a word which our indefatigable lexicographer evades all attempt to define; contenting himself with merely quoting it as a synonyme with others, equally destitute of all meaning, isolated from the idea of the mysterious hand of the *great Governor of the Universe* thus ruling everything in his own way, on immutable principles—by means of his own choice—and for his own ends; whether on a plan digested in the infinite mind, from all eternity, fore-ordaining and providing for every emergency that could, or can, possibly arise; or on occasions, as he sees fit to appoint for the display of his sovereignty in the affairs of his creatures, it is worse than useless

labour to enquire. That is among the things which "the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter i. 12).

However that may be, I am here once more (for such calls can never end but with my life) called upon to prostrate myself, in humble adoration of that Providence, which has directed my steps through life differently, and often (much to my temporary disappointment) in opposition, to the ways I had devised for myself (Proverbs xvi. 9); and so, in spite of my waywardness, has finally strewed my path with roses; while others, also in the last stage of their pilgrimage, are dragging their weary, cheerless days through the thorns and briers, the wormwood and the gall of worldly cares, embittering their every hour, perhaps, both at home and abroad—alike in the

mansion, and in the cottage—hopeless of alleviation in the tinsel of the one, and still less in the gloom of the other, and yet to learn where or how it is to be found elsewhere! For such a harvest, much and long threatened with blight, *“bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases: who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with mercy, and loving kindness”* (Psalm ciii. 1 to 4).

I have, in another place,* been more particular in recognizing God's fatherly care of me through the quicksands of my

* LETTER TO AN AGED FRIEND.

infatuated worldly career; and, by his help, succeed; with no little comfort, in keeping a good conscience towards him so far; but what tongue—what pen—shall attempt to compass the immeasurable height—the fathomless depth of the work of that renewing grace—that love beyond degree—which, after allowing me to gambol on the confines of hell with all the thoughtlessness (as I have somewhere seen that man characterized whose desire is to the things of this life only) of a frolicsome horse, delighting himself in a rich pasture, unchecked by the harness, has enabled me to trust that my name is *after all* “written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. xxi. 27); and that

Though greedy worms devour my skin,
And gnaw my wasting flesh;

When God shall raise my bones again,
He'll cloth them all afresh.

Then shall I see my Jesu's face,
With bright immortal eyes,
And feast on yet unknown grace,
In rapturous surprise.—Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

A. G.

APPENDIX D.

See pages 47 and 48, also 64, et seq.



Mr. Bickersteth,* in his much approved *Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, and in his chapter on *preparation*, says, "Another material subject of inquiry is, as to your FAITH. Have you a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ? Has the conviction of your sinfulness led you to seek, as a poor and lost sinner, those

* Rector of Watton, in Hertfordshire. His treatise has gone through nine large editions, since 1822, and an abridgment of it is now in general use, as a *Companion to the Altar*.

mercies which are treasured up in Christ Jesus? It is only those who know and trust in Christ, the Saviour, that are in a state of meetness for the Lord's Supper; and here you have need to watch against self deception. Many think that they have faith in Christ, when they have it not. If we were to ask them, 'Do you believe in Christ?' they would be ready to take offence at the question, and to reply, 'Do you take me for an infidel? I am a Christian, and of course believe in him.' But, alas! this is not of course. Would to God that all that are called Christians were trusting in Christ Jesus! Real faith is not, as you will have seen in a former chapter, a mere uninfluential assent of the understanding to the truths of Christianity; but such a belief of the gospel as leads us to a daily and hourly

trusting in Christ for a supply of all our necessities."

In a note on the foregoing, he says "*The nature of faith may be illustrated as follows. In the late severe winters in London*" (this was written in 1822), "*a place was fitted up for the reception of the houseless poor; bills were pasted up in different parts of the town, directing persons where to find this refuge. Many read them out of mere curiosity, and fully assented to the truth of the fact, and thought nothing more about it; but the poor and destitute read them as having a deep interest in them, as a guide to direct them where to go for food, and lodging, and all they needed.*" He goes on and asks, "*Is our faith in God's word such as this? Does it lead us to Christ? The same image (Mr. B. adds) will further*

illustrate this subject. If any who were poor and destitute read the bills to which we have alluded, but did not believe them, or thought that if they applied, they would not be accepted; or if they did not come, because they preferred prowling about the streets in beggary, wretchedness, and crime; such persons act the very same part with unbelievers in Christ, who may acknowledge the truth of what the gospel declares, but still do not individually come to Christ for the blessings which he has promised to those who apply to him."

APPENDIX E.

See page 69.

I cannot look to my right hand or to my left, in the street, without seeing calls on my gratitude; but since writing the foregoing, a heavy tribute has been exacted of me, and joyfully rendered, on contrasting the following tragical case with the comfort anticipated at my last hour.

It occurs in the 277th page of the 4th edition of Mr. Taylor's life of the poet Cowper. After alluding to Mr. Cowper's various literary engagements, he says, "These numerous engagements, however, did not prevent the poet from recording his sentiments respecting

any circumstance that occurred, which he thought deserving of notice. About this time, the following melancholy event happened, which drew from him lines expressive of his entire abhorrence of cruelty, by whomsoever perpetrated ; and whether practised upon man, or upon the lower order of animals.

“ John A——, Esq. a young gentleman of large fortune, who was passionately fond of cockfighting, came to his death in the following awful manner. He had a favourite cock, upon which he had won many large sums; the last bet he laid upon it, he lost, which so enraged him, that he had the bird tied to a spit, and roasted alive, before a large fire. The screams of the suffering animal were so affecting, that some gentlemen who were present attempted to interfere ; which so

exasperated Mr. ———, that he seized the poker, and, with the most furious vehemence, declared that he would kill the first man who interfered; but, in the midst of his rage and imprecations, awful to relate, he fell down dead upon the spot.

“Cowper (Mr. Taylor adds) was so deeply affected by the circumstance, that he composed a poetic obituary on the occasion, which was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1789; and has since been published in the additional volumes of his works compiled and edited by his kinsman, Dr. Johnson.”

“We see many going before their Judge in circumstances leaving no satisfactory ground for hope, although even of them we are not to despair. But, were it not

for the interdiction against our judging in any case, we might be tempted to think of the above, that perhaps few cases, so utterly destitute of all hope, have occurred since the days of *Judas Iscariot*. Surely if Mr. A.'s breast had been transparent, a model of hell, with all the infernal machinery at work, would have been exhibited to the horror-stricken beholder.

The limited circulation that may be expected for this humble tract, from an obscure pen, will not do much towards giving it publicity, but I am unwilling to omit my mite to that effect; although the miserable class of the present day, whom it most concerns, will probably be the last to see it, and the least affected by it if they do.

I expected that such a muse as Mr. Cowper's would not have restricted her pen to the rehearsal of Mr. A.'s barbarity. So demoniacal a process is indeed a subject of unusual attraction to any pen; but I trusted that the catastrophe which drew the curtain on the dreadful scene, would have formed a prominent part in the obituary alluded to. In this, however, I have been somewhat disappointed. He recounts the poor bird's sufferings with exquisite pathos, in a poem called *The Cockfighter's Garland*, at page 85 of the volume above quoted, but concludes with the following rather concise notice, where I had hoped he would have been most diffuse. On the anxiety of Mr. A.'s companions to save the bird, and his stern prohibition against all interference, Mr. Cowper says,

All, suppliant, beg a milder fate,
 For the old warrior at the grate;
 He, deaf to pity's call,
 Whirl'd round him, rapid as a wheel,
 His culinary club of steel,
 Menacing death on all.

But vengeance hung not far remote,
 For while he stretched his clam'rous throat,
 And heaven and earth defied,
 Big with a curse too closely pent,
 That struggled vainly for a vent,
 He totter'd, reel'd, and died.

'Tis not for us, with rash surmise,
 To point the judgment of the skies,
 But judgments plain as this,
 That, sent for man's instruction, bring
 A written label on their wing,
 'Tis hard to read amiss !

The ominous hand-writing on the wall,
 which sealed the doom of the impious
 monarch (Daniel v. 5), required interpre-
 tation; but the fatal label sent to Mr.
 A. on the winged shaft of *His* vengeance,
 to whom belongeth vengeance and re-

compense (Deuteronomy xxxii. 23), it is indeed, as Mr. Cowper says, hard to read amiss.

Many, in reading the above, may perhaps congratulate themselves, in the language of the Pharisee, that *their* habits, temper, and disposition are different from Mr. A.'s, shuddering at but imagining the *possibility* of their being so atrocious. It may be of use to remind such, that there was a time when Mr. A. would have been as much shocked at such a thought as they can be;—that nature in them is the same as it was in Mr. A.;—that Mr. A. and they came into the world entirely on a footing in that respect; and that had they not been preserved, by One who alone made the difference (1 Cor. iv. 7), from the temptations that were let loose on the unhappy Mr. A., they would

have been just as liable to plunge into the abyss of complicated misery that finally closed upon him; and that there is no merit of their own in their escape, whatever their pride and self-righteousness may suggest.*

* Mr. Newton, in the *Omicron*, and the 33d Letter, on *Man in his Fallen Estate*, after some general observations, says—"The question here is not concerning this or that man,—a *Nero* or a *Heliogabulus*,—but concerning human nature—the whole race of mankind; the few excepted who are born of God.

"There is indeed a difference amongst men, but it is owing to the restraint of Divine Providence, without which earth would be the very image of hell; for the malignity and wickedness of man by nature can be compared to nothing so properly as the devil. A wolf or a lion, while chained, cannot do so much mischief as if they were loose, but nature is the same in the whole species. Education and self-interest—fear and shame—human laws, and the power of God secretly working on the mind, though unconscious of its influence, combine to form many characters that are externally decent and respectable; and even the most

Where there is but a *spark*, surely
such an escape—such a covenant blessing,

abandoned are *generally* under a restraint which prevents them from manifesting a thousandth part of the wickedness that is in their hearts. But the heart itself is universally deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. xvii. 9). *Children*, if left to themselves, soon feel a gratification in torturing insects and animals; and what misery does the wanton cruelty of men inflict upon cocks, dogs, bulls, bears, and other creatures, which they seem to think were formed for no other end than to feast their savage spirits with their torments."

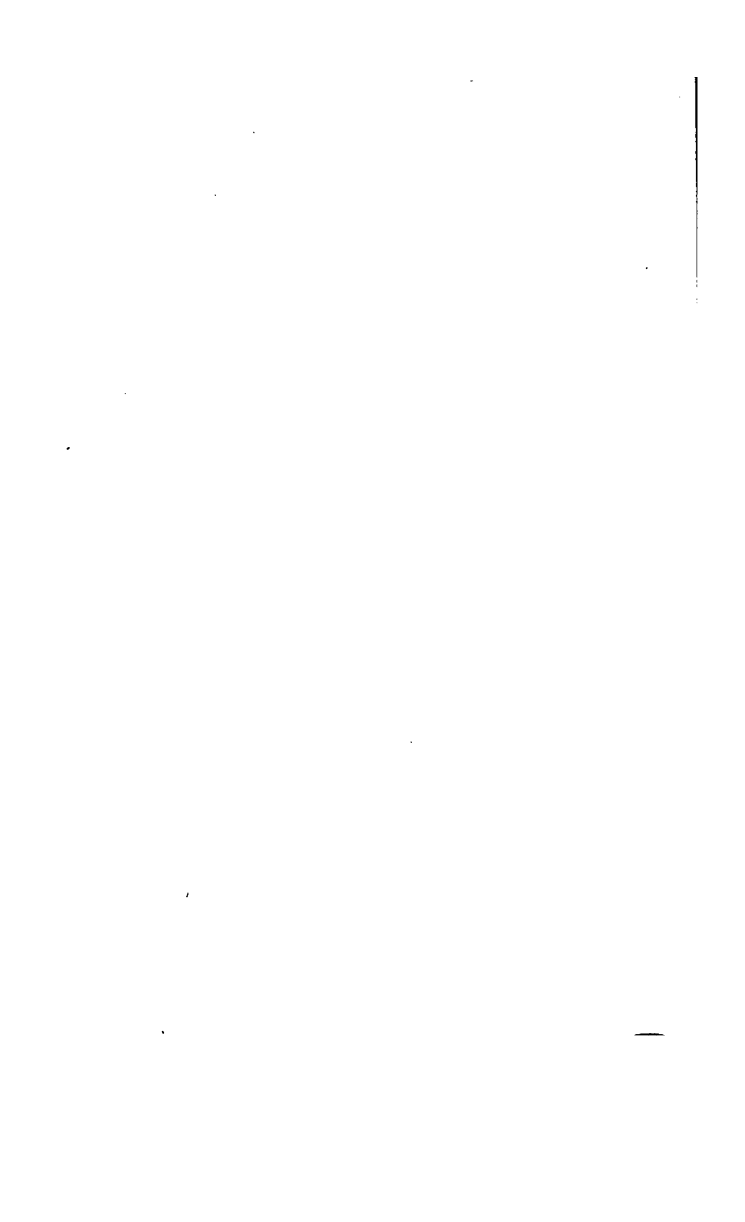
Of all the passions that agitate the breast of man, that for gambling seems to be the most reckless of consequences, and the most ruthless as these consequences regard others. I am here reminded of another anecdote I have met with somewhere. An unhappy man, or *gentleman*, according to that significant but much abused *cognomen*, having lost his last shilling at the gaming table, rushed into the presence of his Judge—a murderer—his hands reeking with his own blood,—leaving a wife and family in a state of utter destitution, without even the means of putting the mangled remains of what was once so dear to them in the ground. The unhappy widow petitioned his surviving accom-

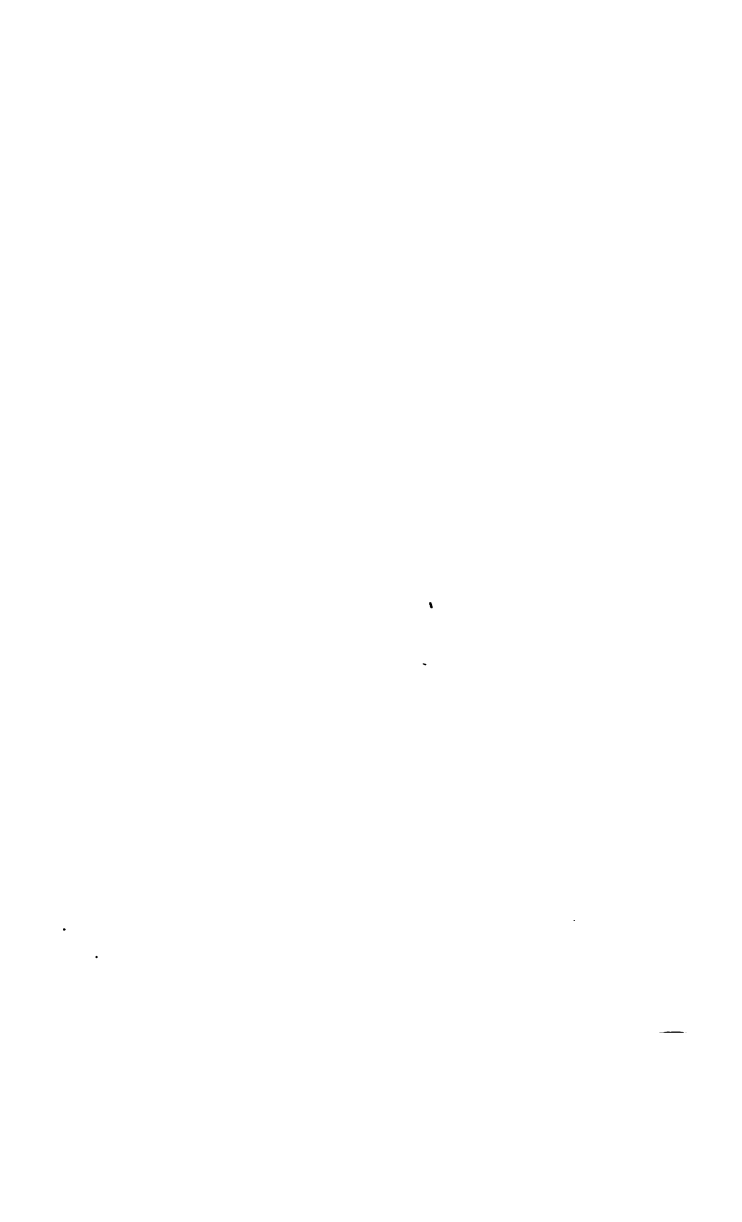
superadded to the common mercies of every day life, cannot miss to fan it into a *flame* of gratitude to the Lord, the keeper of those who trust in him—from whom cometh all their help—who will not suffer their feet to be moved; and who preserves their going out, and their coming in from this time forth, and for evermore (Psalm cxxi.): and I think it is to be regretted that Mr. Cowper, with a text of such melancholy adaptation, did not devote the energies of his prolific mind to the embellishment and improvement of Mr. A.'s case, so pregnant with edification to the vast numbers of those called Christians, who, though possessing

plices in the work of mutual plunder, for a pittance sufficient for that purpose; to which appeal the heartless, cold-blooded answer was,—“*O, we have done with him*”!

perhaps moral and religious advantages of a superior order, have not yet laid the supremely interesting subjects of death, judgment, and eternity, seriously to heart—denying them as intruders whenever they sought admittance, as I know from experience. Let such beware lest a day come,—a day with calamity in its wings, when, in spite of the bars and bolts opposed to such visitors by unrenewed nature, they may *force* an entrance when there is the least preparation for the entertainment of guests that stand so little upon ceremony.

A. G.





1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.

2. The second part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city of New York.



